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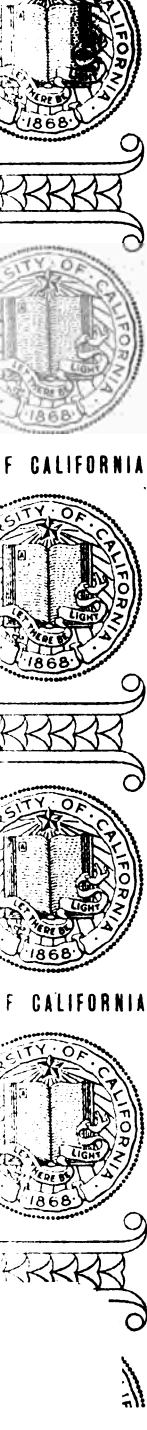
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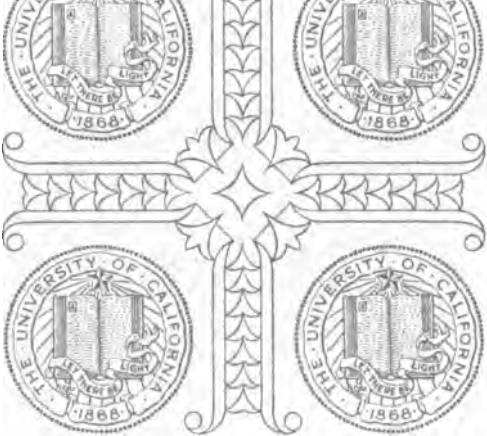
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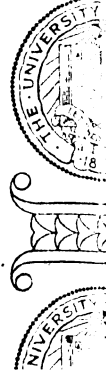
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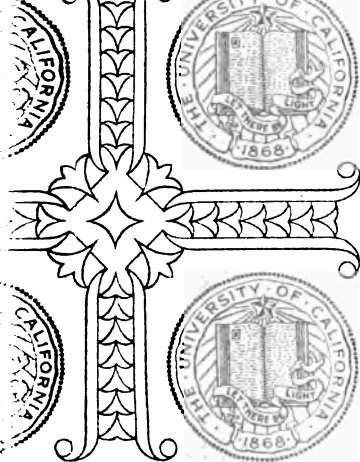


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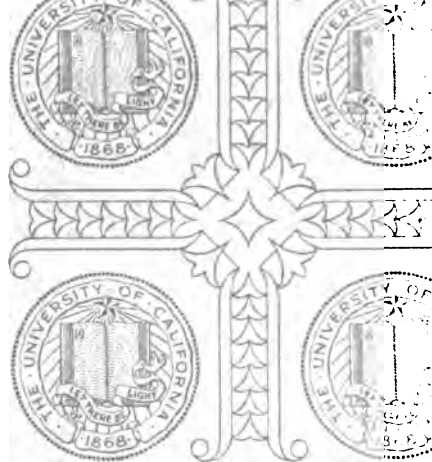


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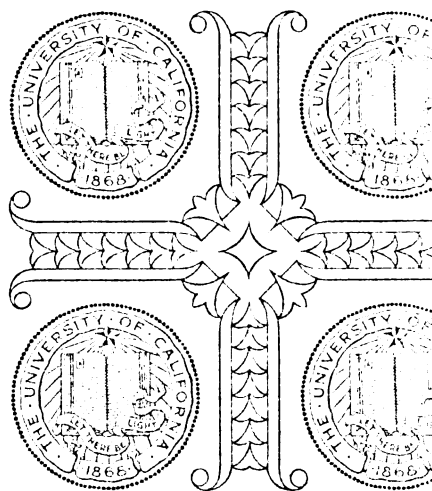


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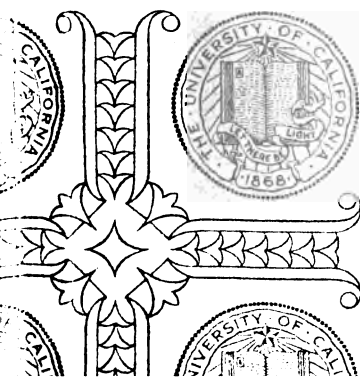


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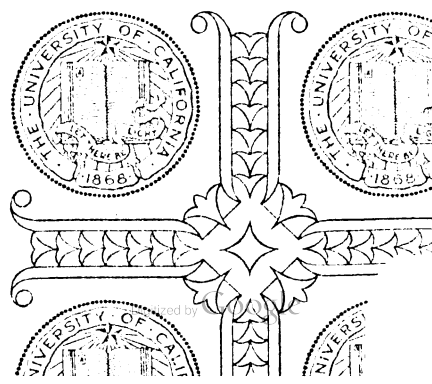


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*R. J. Hamerton.*

# THE ATTENDANT, JACQUOT, KILLED BY A BOAR.

*Dark & Light. Laid to the Queen.*

Published by Hamerton & Co., 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

THE  
SPORTSMAN IN FRANCE:

COMPRISING

A SPORTING RAMBLE

THROUGH PICARDY AND NORMANDY,

AND

BOAR SHOOTING

IN

LOWER BRITTANY.

BY FREDERIC TOLFREY, ESQ.

||

With Twelve Illustrations.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:  
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,  
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1841.

shot



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TO

ARCHER CROFT, ESQUIRE,

GREENHAM LODGE,

NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE.

---

MY DEAR CROFT,

FROM one of the best sportsmen that ever entered a field, and certainly one of the best shots that ever carried a gun, did I receive my first lessons in shooting; and to his bright example am I indebted for what little proficiency I may have attained in the use of the trigger:

THAT PERSON IS YOURSELF.

It is therefore with as much of gratitude as of pleasure that I avail myself of the

frank and cordial permission you have granted me to dedicate this little work to you ; and the gratification I experience is enhanced in no slight degree by the opportunity afforded me of evincing the esteem and regard I entertain for an old and valued friend.

To your private worth I am no stranger ; and the high estimation in which you are held in your own county is a practical proof that your public conduct is as duly appreciated in Berkshire as your domestic virtues and companionable qualities are by your more immediate friends.

Long may you live to uphold the character of the old English Squire — one, alas ! but seldom met with now-a-days ; but which honourable title you have justly earned for yourself, by uniting in your own person every quality which can adorn an English country gentleman.

True it is that some few winters have passed over our heads since you *shot*, and I *scared*, the snipes and partridges in the neighbourhood of Caen ; but I can never forget the delightful sport I enjoyed with you in Normandy, nor the society by which it was varied.

You first taught my ideas how to *shoot*: I have now only to hope that the influence of your name may also cause this humble production to *go off*.

Believe me, ever,

My dear CROFT,

Most sincerely and faithfully yours,

FRED. TOLFREY



## PREFACE.

---

AT the earnest solicitation of some old friends and brother sportsmen, I have been induced to obtrude the following pages on the notice of the public.

In the year 1833, some few extracts from my private journal appeared in a sporting periodical; they were furnished with the view of promoting the success of the work, and to the circumstance of their having appeared in print at all, I must attribute the suggestion of publishing my rough sketches in their present form. The Reader will, I trust, pardon the infliction,

for which my advisers should be held responsible.

My only hope of success is on the score of novelty, for I believe I am the first sportsman who has ventured to describe in print the exciting amusement of boar shooting in Lower Brittany.

I need not here remark that there is much formality to be observed, and some little difficulty to overcome, before any shooting can be obtained in this country ; to a chosen few only is the indulgence permitted.

They manage matters differently in France, to which hospitable land I would direct the attention of the half-pay officer and the man of moderate means, if peradventure they be endowed with sporting propensities.

One of my principal motives for submitting this unpretending little work to the notice of the wandering sportsman

has been, to shew that there is some really good shooting to be met with in *la belle France*; and to those who delight in a little admixture of risk with their field amusements, the *chasse aux sangliers* will not prove the least attractive portion of my narrative.

If the contents, therefore, of these volumes afford enough of novelty and of interest to amuse those who may honour them by a perusal, I shall have no occasion to regret having bowed to the opinions of others.

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THE

# SPORTSMAN IN FRANCE.

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## CHAPTER I.

Preliminary observations—Meeting an old friend—  
Crossing from Brighton to Dieppe—Hotel  
Royal—Trout fishing in the neighbourhood—  
Arques—Torcy—Excellent sport—Awkward  
rencontre with Monsieur le Maire.

WE boast that comfort is neither known, appreciated, nor to be found out of England,—granted ;—but tell me why, with the temptations and inducements to remain at home, our countrymen are for ever leaving their own shores in quest of adventures and amusement abroad ?

Gentle reader, I will undertake to an-

swer the question for you. John Bull is a restless animal,—he is never contented in one spot,—you cannot make a fixture of him,—change of scene is necessary to his existence,—the very idea of being chained to his fireside is sufficient to beget a desire for leaving it.

With me, I must confess that this national peculiarity is a besetting sin ; from my cradle I have been a Rambler, for I had scarcely cut my teeth, ere I accompanied my family to India, and during my sojourn in the far East I visited every presidency, and explored no inconsiderable portion of Persia and Arabia to boot ; in short, I have hunted, shot, and fished, in every quarter of the globe.

Much have I seen, and some little knowledge of sporting matters have I picked up in my travels, which, peradventure, I may publish at some future day, should this, my first attempt, find favour

in the eyes of an indulgent public. I have, however, in these pages, confined myself to sporting in France, and I hope to shew, by the time the reader has closed these volumes, that there is very tolerable shooting, as well as fishing, to be met with on the other side of the channel.

To begin then with the fishing :—

Few brothers of the angle are aware of the excellence of the trout fishing in France. I have walked from one end to the other of Louis Philippe's dominions, both before and since he was placed upon the throne, and have met but few, very few, of my fellow-countrymen by the side of the numerous streams and smaller rivers which are so bountifully stocked with the speckled delicacy. The Departement du Nord, the Pas de Calais, Picardy, Lower Normandy, and parts of Brittany, abound in trout streams.

I will take it for granted that the ama-

teur has attained a sufficient degree of proficiency in the gentle art, either practical or theoretical, to enable him to catch his dozen of trout, without endangering the loss of his casting-line, or the demolition of his fly-rod ; I shall content myself, therefore, with addressing a few observations to the lovers of fly-fishing, in the way of pointing out to them where they will meet with excellent sport on the other side of the Channel.

The major part of the expatriated English, who live in the Anglo-Gallican seaport towns of Calais, Boulogne, Dunkerque, Dieppe, and Havre, (although, I am happy to say, there are some exceptions,) entertain the idea that they have a *right* to fish and shoot wherever they please in a strange land ; and instead of exercising the common good-breeding of asking permission of the landed proprietors to knock down their partridges or

- hook their trout, they obtrude themselves per force on the property of the natives, thereby engendering an ill-feeling against *all* their fellow-countrymen, which, otherwise, would never be called forth.

These pseudo gentlemen appear to have forgotten that their own insignificance and vulgarity would have been an insuperable bar to the enjoyment of either sport on any nobleman's or private gentleman's manor and preserves in their own country, and that they would not have dared to wet a line or draw trigger without that leave which to them was unattainable. The tolerance and urbanity with which these several under-bred persons have been treated, have served in many instances to increase rather than diminish the obnoxious proceeding. The eyes of the French gentlemen, however, are beginning to be opened, for they have been taught a little discrimination by dearly-bought experience.

For my own part, I am happy in the opportunity of recording the uniform politeness, good-feeling, and civility, which I have experienced from one end of France to the other, at the hands of the several seigneurs and men of property. I never, in any one instance, met with a denial ; all that is required on the part of the landed proprietor is, that you will pay him the compliment of calling at his chateau, and asking permission to shoot or fish, as the case may be. This, I can undertake to say, will be frankly and kindly given, and, moreover, every facility afforded in furtherance of your sport.

The French country gentleman has not the remotest idea of fishing with the artificial fly ; but one and all are well aware, and are the least in the world jealous, of our acknowledged proficiency in the art. It is rather bordering upon the “ dog in the manger ” feeling, but the fact is undeniable, that a Frenchman would

rather see you kill ten brace of birds, than half as many trout ; this I have invariably found to be the case.

The trip I am about to describe was undertaken quite unexpectedly, the result of an accidental meeting. On a certain day of the month of April, in the year 1830, it came to pass, that, being in Sussex, I ran over to Brighton to purchase a setter of some celebrity, which was left for sale at a certain livery stable. On the morning after my arrival, and during a saunter on the Marine Parade, I met an old friend and brother-fisherman, who was waiting for the steam-packet to convey him over to Dieppe, where two intimate acquaintances of ours, regular Waltonians, had taken up their abode.

As the packet was not to sail until the following day, Mr. W—— and myself agreed to dine together at his hotel, the Albion, and over a bottle of claret was I

seduced into a compliance to accompany him. The account my fly-fishing friend gave me of the sport to be met with in the neighbourhood of Dieppe was so exceedingly tempting, that a compliance was irresistible. I consequently despatched an epistle by that night's mail to my factotum in town, desiring him to forward to Dieppe, with the least possible delay, every article appertaining to an angler's equipment, with which I was happily provided, and which he knew where to find in a particular nook and corner of a certain cupboard in my chambers. The rods, reels, lines, flies, dubbing, feathers, hooks, &c., reached me in due time, and I made good use of them, as will be seen hereafter.

On the following morning, about half-past ten, we started from the shores of Sussex in the Liverpool steamer, for that fashionable resort of the sea-bathing por-

tion of Parisian idlers,—Dieppe. I had the good fortune to meet with a particularly pleasant party on board, with some of whom I was on intimate terms, and our accidental meeting gave additional zest to the excursion. The weather was unusually fine, and the sea as smooth as a mill-pond,—every person in the best possible humour. Lady A——, and her accomplished and talented daughter; Mr. D——, Captain G——, and Mr. S——, of literary celebrity, furnished their quota of conversation and anecdote; in short, a merrier or more intellectual *société de circonstance* I never crossed the Channel with. Fortunately, not one of the passengers “wished to be very unwell,” so that all were assembled at the dinner-table.

The usual routine of cabin fare was served up at three o’clock, roasted beef at top, and boiled ditto at bottom, (a proof, by the way, that the purveyor was not out

of pocket, as he made both ends *meat*,) and legs of sheep for side dishes ; to say nothing of hampers of greens, and bushels of potatoes. This solid fare was washed down with bottled stout, intermixed with potations of African nastiness, by the learned in these matters called "cape," but which our host was pleased to name "sherry." After this substantial repast had been discussed, we were favoured with a meagre fluid, in long-necked bottles, under the attractive cognomen of claret, but which, in the innocence of my heart, I set down as a mixture of "Hunt's matchless" and red ink. While the ladies and some few would-be tee-totallers were partaking of a hot discoloured beverage, by the steward named tea, we were summoned on deck by the report of a gun announcing our approach to the harbour of Dieppe, and we were presently boarded by two jabbering pilots, who kept

up an incessant clatter until the Liverpool was hauled alongside the quay in the port.

After a great many unnecessary and impertinent interrogatories on the part of the police agents, gens d'armes, and a whole gang of meddlers, we were permitted to land, when we were assailed by fresh annoyances from the *commissionnaires*, waiters, and other *employés* of the different hotels. We were absolutely *assomme'd* by the contending touters, and it was with the greatest difficulty we waded through the crowd, and elbowed our way up to the hotel we had previously determined upon patronizing. This was the Hotel Royal, which (*par parenthèse*,) is one of the most comfortable and best appointed I ever put up at ;—it is among the best, if not the very best, conducted establishment in France. The table d'hôte is superlatively good,—the wines excel-

lent,—and the charges, considering the liberality and quality of the fare and accommodation, moderate.

I deem it a duty incumbent upon every rambling sportsman, to let his fellow-wanderers know where good cheer is to be met with ; therefore, upon principle, I recommend all the fraternity, should they ever visit Dieppe, to go to Clarke's Hotel Royal ; and if they do not enjoy themselves, I am no true prophet.

Thanks to the sea-breezes, the ponderous tiffin of which we had partaken on board of the steamer had not subdued our appetites, for by ten o'clock we were ready to do justice to an appetizing repast, consisting of *soupe au vermicelle*,—a *matelotte* of eels,—some *cotelettes*, and a Normandy capon. The sauterne and champagne were of first-rate quality, and we went to roost well-pleased with our host, his “chef,” and his cellar.

On the following morning, I had the honour of receiving a visit from my respected and venerable friend, Mr. S——, who, with Captain L—— of the — dragoons, was good enough to call upon me. Mr. W—— and myself learnt from these gentlemen, that our fellow-disciples of Izaak Walton, whom we had resolved to visit, were rustivating at Arques, a village renowned in history, and situated about three miles from Dieppe. My companion and myself received a most kind and pressing invitation from Mr. S—— to dine with him, which, of course, we had too much good taste to decline.

At his hospitable board we had the good-fortune to meet one or two professing and professed trout-fishers, and they informed us that several streams and small rivers within a circumference of twelve miles abounded with fine fish. Mr. W—— had sent an express to Arques,

early in the day, announcing our arrival, as well as to convey an intimation to our brother-fishermen that we should beat up their quarters early on the following morning. Captain L—— breakfasted with us the next morning at the hotel, and before noon we were kindly greeted by our brother-sportsmen at the beautiful village of Arques. We found our friends, Captain P—— and Mr. O'R——, most comfortably established with their families in this retired and romantic spot; their domestics were English, and the internal cleanliness and arrangement of their dwellings betrayed that comfort which belongs to our nation alone. Captain P—— would not allow us to return to Dieppe until the evening, and we partook of his family dinner, to which his neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. O'R——, were also bidden guests.

The conversation, as may be supposed,

after the ladies had retired, turned upon fishing, and I was rejoiced to find that the cheering account given me at Brighton, by my friend W——, had not been in the slightest degree exaggerated, for the description we heard of the waters led us to expect some excellent sport.

After discussing divers bottles of some delicious *Macon*, and a few glasses of very rare and curious Burgundy, we parted with our hospitable countrymen with a promise of riding over to them on the following Monday, to try the streams, should my fishing-tackle have arrived.

At the time I write of, Dieppe was the dearest of all French sea-port towns, quite upon a par with Brighton as regards the price of lodgings, which were at a ridiculously high rate in the town. This circumstance, coupled with the attraction of the society of our brother-fishermen, determined Mr. W—— and myself to hire

apartments in the village of Arques, if possible. This arrangement, I am happy to say, was accomplished ; and as soon as my rods reached me, we took possession of the upper part of a house next door to our friend, Captain P——, and established ourselves forthwith in this rural hamlet. For a salon, salle à manger, two bedrooms, and a room for a servant, we paid sixty francs per month, plate and linen included. In the town of Dieppe three times the amount would have been demanded for very inferior accommodation.

And now for the trout-streams :—Wander in which direction you will for ten miles around Dieppe or Arques, you will stumble on a trout stream. The best I know of is the river which runs through “Grand-Torcy,” about eight miles in a south-westerly direction from Arques. My first excursion was to this spot. The long wished for tackle having arrived, an

early day was fixed for trying the water—indeed no time was to be lost—for it will be remembered that the spring of 1830 was rather a forward one, and the “caddis” were now coming into life.

On the Tuesday, instead of Monday, we started soon after daylight for Torcy, not before we had comforted the inward man with some strong *café noir*, diluted with some *veritable* Cognac, instead of milk. Captain P—— and Mr. O’R—— were provided with a vehicle, Mr. W—— and myself were not so fortunate: the only procurable quadrupeds at the livery stable in Dieppe were a pony and a mule, and as we were in a state of blissful ignorance as to the relative good qualities of these very questionable animals, we resolved to toss up for choice of steeds,—heads for the pony, tails for the hybrid. Having made a mental selection in favour of the former, and being moreover a stanch royalist, I

proclaimed my preference by shouting for "*Charles Dix*," but, as an evil fore-runner of that unfortunate monarch's downfall, the royal image faced the dust ; tails were triumphant, and I bore the *reverse* with Christian fortitude. The pony was thus lost to me, and for consolation under my disappointment I clung to the hope that some latent excellence of my mule might tend to remove the antipathy I entertained towards these perverse brutes.

The livery stable keeper had sent the mule and pony to Arques in the evening, as we were to start for Torcy soon after daylight the following morning. By half-past three Mr. W—— and myself were mounted and prepared to follow Captain P—— and Mr. O'R——, who led the way in a stanhope. My mule was of the softer sex, a "*mulier formosa*," as my friend W—— called her ; and of all the

obstinate self-willed she-devils, this feminine offspring of horse and donkey was beyond compare the most determined.

A difference of opinion soon arose between us as to the road we were to travel, the mule evincing a decided predilection for the highway towards Dieppe, while I was bent upon going in a diametrically opposite direction. By dint of thumping, kicking, and coaxing, and a vigorous application of a stout ash plant, I managed to get the lady's head the right way, and we shuffled on at a most uneasy pace after the buggy. Of all inflictions under the sun, none can equal the riding a broken-down headstrong mule over eight miles of a French road before breakfast; I could not condemn my bitterest foe to greater torture.

By five o'clock we were at the scene of action, and having reached the cabaret of the village, our hostess, in a state of semi-

somnambulism, undertook to prepare some café au lait and an omelette, while we were putting our rods together. Having partaken of our hurried breakfast, we betook ourselves to the river, not without parting instructions to the presiding priestess of the *Rendezvous des Pêcheurs* to prepare a second and more substantial *dejeuner à la fourchette* by twelve o'clock. A quarter of an hour's walk brought us to some of the best stands on the river, and more likely water it was impossible to behold. Upon displaying my tackle, I found I had made a judicious selection of flies, as I was assured by my friends they were of a colour and character to captivate the trout in these parts.

Our party here divided, each selecting a portion of the river for himself. For the first hour we did nothing; not a fish could be moved; at length, in making a cast under the stump of a decayed tree, I

was fortunate enough to hook a fine fellow of two pounds weight. This was the first trout taken, and, as if the others had only been waiting for an example, they now began to rise freely to the fly, and for about three hours I never had better sport: by nine o'clock I had three-and-twenty fish in my basket, and scarcely a trout under a pound.

The sun, by this time, had too much power to afford much hope of their feeding any longer, and I found I was not mistaken in the supposition, for they suddenly left off rising—not a fish would even look at my flies. Making a virtue, therefore, of necessity, my companions and myself returned to our *cabaret*, and, upon comparing notes, it was found that we had all been tolerably successful. We had altogether about ninety fish: Captain P—— twenty-one, Mr. W—— twenty-seven, Mr. O'R—— nineteen, and

myself twenty-three ; and as we were one and all anxious for a practical proof of the flavour and condition of the Torcy trout, a selection of the smallest of these delicate fish was made for immediate immolation in the frying-pan. Our hostess, the expertest of landladies, seconded our wishes with praiseworthy expedition ; the process of cleaning and washing having been accomplished in the shortest possible time, our captives were in a trice hissing in the boiling lard, and sending forth most savoury odours in the capacious kitchen.

Our appetites having reached a most enviable pitch of keenness, I need scarcely add, that we did ample justice to our well-dressed repast. The trout were delicious, and in the finest possible season ; to these were added an *omelette aux fines herbes*, very creditably served up, a pair of roasted ducks, a capital salad,

and some highly-scented cheese. The cider was drinkable, if not palatable, and the *eau de vie* quite strong enough to counteract any ill effects arising from partaking too freely of a sour beverage.

Fishermen may, I hope, be pardoned for taking a glass of "hot with," even at noon, and without a blush do I therefore record that, on the removal of the cloth, a huge pitcher of boiling water, a pyramid of beet-root sugar, a *flacon* of brandy, flanked by four very green-looking tumblers, graced our board. The grog was brewed *secundem artem*, and proved a most comforting restorative. My friend P——, ever alive to our amusement, had provided himself with two packs of cards, and, while sipping our nectar, we played at ten *sous* whist ; and the interest excited and the science displayed during the progress of our game were quite as great as if the stakes had been pounds and crowns.

By three o'clock the weather had changed, inasmuch as it threatened rain ; the wind, however, continuing in the same favourable quarter, in defiance of the over-hanging clouds, we sallied forth to the river's side, in the hope of finding the trout in a rising mood ; nor were we disappointed, for as fast as our flies fell on the water we hooked one or more fish. I never caught so many trout in so short a time ; they ran rather smaller than in the morning, but afforded us excellent sport.

While we were thus pleasantly filling our baskets, our amusement experienced a slight check in the person of a *garde de chasse*, who told us we were on forbidden ground, and intimated that if we persisted in continuing our sport we should be fishing in troubled waters. He informed us that this portion of the river belonged to a Monsieur de —— somebody, whose name or title sounded some-

what like Chancellor; but as we were not much interested in the matter, we did not prosecute our inquiries.

In the first instance, we tried entreaties; but finding these fail, we came a little bravado over the keeper; but then not succeeding, the jingling of a few francs softened down the gentleman's scruples, and after levying a contribution of two francs upon each of us, he repaired to the cabaret, where we undertook to satisfy his craving still further, by allowing him *carte blanche* upon the larder and cellar of our hostess, of which permission he availed himself to a surprising extent.

We remained in uninterrupted enjoyment of our sport until dark, and killed a prodigious quantity of trout, none of them very large, seldom exceeding a pound and a half, although we had one or two glorious exceptions. In the course of the evening, I had the mortification of losing

a splendid fish, owing to the over-anxiety of an urchin who undertook to assist me with the landing-net. The trout must have weighed upwards of three pounds, or nearly four. I had hooked, played, and all-but killed my fish, and had coaxed him into a shallow a little way down the stream for the purpose of landing him ; the boy, in his anxiety to secure my prize, gave the net a sudden jerk, broke my foot-length close to the dropper, and pitched the trout into the deep water instead of on the bank, as he had intended. A kick upon the sitting-parts of the young Frenchman sent him sprawling into the shallow-water, as a reward for his clumsiness. The effect of this gentle immersion made little François more cautious ever after, for on all future occasions I found him an efficient and useful companion in my angling excursions.

We returned to our *auberge*, where our

provident landlady was busily employed in making preparations for our dinner, or, as she called it, *souper*, which consisted of some boiled trout, roasted fowls, an omelette au jambon, spinach, and beans. We had not the courage to drink the wine, but contented ourselves with the cider and brandy toddy. The beds, as they are all over France, were excellent; indeed, I must in justice say, that the *Rendezvous des Pécheurs* at Torcy is a most comfortable road-side inn: the landlady knows how to cater for her guests and attend to their wants; and, above all, is one of the most civil, obliging, good-natured persons in her vocation, I ever met with.

On the following day the elements waged war with us—it rained fish-ponds the whole morning, so we packed up our rods, and making up our minds to encounter a thorough soaking, we left the

*Rendezvous des Pêcheurs* for our habitations at Arques, where Captain L—— had engaged to meet us at dinner at Captain P——'s, from whence I was to accompany him to a ball at Dieppe in the evening. Whether it was the rest, the hay, or the oats, in which my mule had indulged at Torcy, or the idea of returning to her own stable at Dieppe, I will not pretend to say; some magical influence, however, had worked a miraculous change in the disposition and powers of progression in the animal, for she carried me home most satisfactorily; so much so as to elicit a request from Mr. W—— to change quadrupeds, which I was too wise to comply with.

Upon our recounting to Captain L—— the success we had met with at Torcy, he was kind enough to promise me a day's sport in another part of the country, about ten miles on the Rouen road; and

with this object in view I resolved upon remaining in Dieppe, at the Hotel Royal, until Captain L—— could accompany me.

Accordingly, on the night succeeding the ball, Captain L—— and myself started from Dieppe by the Paris diligence, which leaves the *Hotel de la Rue* between ten and eleven o'clock, and towards one in the morning (an industrious flea would hōp it in half the time) we were deposited at the post-house on the high road, about half a mile from the estate through which ran the river we were about to visit. Here we went to bed, but, as far as I was concerned, not to sleep ; for the paillasse upon which my mattresses were laid was inhabited by a colony of mice, who, not liking the superincumbent weight of some eleven stone and upwards, resented the intrusion by scrambling, scratching, and squeaking so effectually as to

preclude the possibility of a moment's repose.

As soon after daylight as prudence permitted, I aroused my companion, whose couch, not having contained any frolicsome inmates, was most reluctantly quit-  
ted. A refreshing cup of aromatic coffee dispelled all drowsiness, and I accompanied my Cicerone to this preserved water, in eager anticipation of glorious sport.

The river at this spot runs through the grounds at that time the property of Monsieur de Tocqueville, a French nobleman, whose *château* graced its banks; but I regret to add that this charming estate has passed into other hands, in consequence of the former owner's ill-luck at the hazard-table. This stream abounds with trout, some of which run to a large size. It is a beautiful little river, and the angler's exclamation on first behold-

ing it would be, "There *must* be trout here !"

Unfortunately for us, this day, of all others, had been selected by some labourers for weeding the stream, which operation put an end to our projected sport. We were, therefore, fain to follow its course until we were out of the influence of these obstacles, and having reached some clear water, we set to work in good earnest. We had not calculated upon going beyond the bounds prescribed for our amusement ; but finding some extraordinary good sport, we were induced to follow up our luck, until we encroached upon the land of an ill-favoured, sour-tempered, cross-grained farmer, who, as our evil stars would have it, was mayor of a hamlet consisting of eleven huts and as many pigsties.

We were so intent upon our amusement that we were not aware of the ap-

proach of this functionary, and my piscatory labours were suddenly, and rather unceremoniously, interrupted by the whizzing of a large scythe over my head, caused by an angry flourish of this savage farmer. After sundry questions as to who we were, our business, &c., accompanied by divers menaces, we were informed that we should have the pleasure of being conducted by two *gens d'armes* to the prison of Dieppe, for a trespass.

We endeavoured to appease the exasperated proprietor, but all to no purpose; accompany him to the *mairie* in the village we must. We offered him the fish, which he would not accept; nothing but a *procès verbal* would satisfy the brute. I was for resisting, but Captain L—— persuaded me to accompany *Monsieur le Maire* to his seat of authority. I did so very reluctantly, venting curses

“ not loud, but deep,” at the unseasonable interruption.

On entering the village, a crowd of naked, filthy children and half-starved curs raised such a din as never before was heard ; and on arriving at the mayor’s house a clerk was sent for (I do not think the fellow himself could write) to take down our names and draw up the information, which was to be forwarded to *Monsieur le Sous-Préfet*, at Dieppe.

While the interesting document was being prepared, it struck me that this farce was merely being enacted to extort money from *Milors Anglais*, and rather than be subjected to any annoyance, I whispered in the great man’s ear to the effect that, if he would condescend to step aside with me, we might possibly *arranger l’affaire*. I slipped ten francs into my friend’s hand, and no sooner had the two crown pieces come in contact with

his horny palm than the face of the business was completely changed. He told the man of letters, who was driving his quill at rail-road speed, that I had explained the matter *quite to his satisfaction*; that it was a mistake altogether; we were *des braves étrangers*—were *les amis intimes* of *Monsieur de Tocqueville*, and had permission of *le seigneur* to fish all the way to Dieppe.

This harlequinade being concluded, *Monsieur le Maire* politely presented us with some sour cider, to quaff to the health of *Madame son épouse*, who was knitting hose in a corner of the room. The hospitable offer was accepted, after which we returned to the river, at the price of ten francs, and with the probability of a ten-days' stomach-ache from the effects of the acidulated draught we had been compelled to swallow.

To compensate for the unexpected de-

lay we had experienced, we had wonderful sport all the evening, Captain L—— and myself killing thirty brace of very fine trout between us. The *rencontre* with the mayor, which I have recorded, was one of the very few instances of extortion and incivility I encountered; for, generally speaking, the peasantry are as obliging and friendly as the *seigneurs* and proprietors themselves.

But within nearly the whole distance I have named as the scenes of our two first exploits, the angler of moderate ambition will find very good encouragement. Should any exploring fisherman be induced to run over to Dieppe to try his luck, I will tell him where he will meet with sport.

I will suppose him to be at Arques. Let him pass the *Commune* and keep on the road towards Torcy. About three miles from the former place he will come

to a mill ; let him take a cast or two below it in the pool, and he will thank me for the hint. I have caught some very pretty fish, from a pound to a pound and a half, at the foot of the race. He may then proceed, *on the other side of the stream*, up to *Petit Torcy*, and, if he be skilful, he will stand a chance of filling his basket.

The jolliest of French farmers lives on the side of the stream, at the extremity of the village, whose obliging better-half will fry his fish, and give him as much cider as the angler in his discretion may think proper to swallow ; and on his return homewards he may whip the water all the way to Arques, to the *Commune* I mentioned. There are several tributary streams between *Petit Torcy* and Dieppe, in which abundance of trout will be found in the merry month of May.

One or two of my countrymen who

have been residents in Dieppe for some years are very good performers: Dr. Southcote is a capital fisherman; his favourite spot is from the mill of which I have made mention, up to Petit Torcy. Mr. Clarke, also, who was formerly one of the pages of the presence to George the Fourth, is a particularly neat trout-fisher, and has done great execution for miles around. Either of these gentlemen—but especially the latter—will give every information to any amateur seeking it.

The Doctor, if I remember rightly, is rather shy of imparting his piscatorial knowledge; that is, he is chary as to his information regarding his favourite haunts—he *has* been known to unbosom himself of his secret over a bottle; but these are occasions upon which we all open our hearts.

Between Dieppe and St. Valery sur

Somme, or rather, I should say, between Dieppe and Abbeville, at a village called Blaugy, there is some splendid trout-fishing in the river of that name. One of the most wealthy and influential landed proprietors in France has a magnificent chateau here; he is, in truth, the *Seigneur du Village*, and a more truly kind and hospitable man does not breathe. I had the good fortune to be particularly recommended and introduced to him by the Mayor of Dieppe, and have passed many happy days under his roof. He is a sportsman at heart, and although he may not pursue and kill his game, and hook his fish after the most approved English fashion, he equals in ardour the veriest Nimrod this country ever gave birth to.

## CHAPTER II.

Bird-shooting in France—Not encouraged as in England—Reasons adduced and causes explained — Partridge-shooting at St. Omer — Woodcock-shooting at Montreuil sur Mer — Snipe-shooting at Abbeville, and wild-fowl-shooting at St. Valery sur Somme.

I REMAINED at Arques in the enjoyment of the society of my fellow-countrymen, and fished the neighbouring rivers during the months of May and June and part of July. Towards the end of the latter month, the quiet of our rural retreat was disturbed by the overthrow of the Bourbon dynasty.

The political excitement reached even to our little village, and, with some little disquietude, we awaited the issue of the memorable *trois jours* of July, 1830.

I was induced to accompany an enthusiastic French gentleman to the city of the barricades, and the result of my visit to the French capital was a trip into Lower Brittany—but I must not anticipate my story; and before I commence this portion of my narrative, I must crave the reader's indulgence to accompany me to St. Omer and Abbeville, in the neighbourhood of which towns I enjoyed some excellent partridge and snipe-shooting, both previously and subsequently to my visit to the trout-streams at Dieppe, with my friend Mr. W——.

When Sterne asserted that things were better managed in France than in England, he never bethought him of partridge-shooting. This venerable and facetious

ecclesiastic was not a sporting one, else would he have inserted the Irishman's "salvo"—*barring the shooting*. Strange it is, but no less strange than true, that even up to this hour a Frenchman is not a sportsman—it is not in him, and I am prone to think never will be. *Poeta nascitur non fit*. When I say sportsman, I speak of this particular branch,—field-shooting; for the ever-amusing and talented Nimrod would lead us to hope and believe that a new generation is springing up in the land of the Gaul, and that we shall soon not only hear of, but see, some good and experienced steeple chasers, if not fox-hunters, on the other side of the Channel.

The first of September is not looked forward to in France with such intense anxiety and anticipatory glee as with us. Why this is I know not, for a finer bird country, in every sense of the word, is

not to be seen. Perhaps the following reasons may in some measure account for the non-existence of that hereditary feeling with which every landed proprietor is endowed in old England.

The abolition of the law of primogeniture in France is, I suspect, the primary cause; the properties, both landed and personal, being equally divided amongst the children, so that the firstborn has no cause to be grateful to his sire, as Sir Anthony Absolute remarks, for begetting him before his brothers and sisters. Hence the almost universal lack of large family mansions and estates; and as the sons have, generally speaking, so little land whereon to preserve their game, they are proportionably indifferent as to the fate of it.

A Frenchman, unless he happen providentially to be the *filz unique* of rich parents, can take no pride in his inherit-

ance, and, feeling no interest whatever in his strip of acres, looks upon shooting partridges more as a matter of every-day occurrence than as an amusement of an all-engrossing and enthusiastic nature. He knows and feels that he is dependent upon his neighbours or friends for any enjoyment he may derive from this pastime, and having no self-importance or family-pride to gratify, he is lukewarm in the pursuit. Another reason I think I may adduce which contributes in no slight degree to the marked difference between a French and English sportsman ;—until very lately, our Gallic neighbours had not a dog fit for anything, or worthy the name of pointer or setter ; their guns, too, were of the lowest order of workmanship, and about as useful in turnips or stubble as a regimental musket ; in short, shooting is not held in the same ratio of

estimation as with us ; there is no emulation.

In England this healthful recreation is appreciated, encouraged, and upheld ; and an English youth of sixteen, who cannot bring down a double shot with his own Purdey or Manton, on the first of September, is looked upon as a milksop ; whereas, in France, the going out at all is matter of little moment. For lack of encouragement, therefore, the breed of dogs has neither been preserved nor encouraged, and the workmen have not exerted their talents to produce superior guns. It is true, that some of the *élite* of the French *noblesse* have persuaded Monsieur Le Page to manufacture a few crack *fusils*, but they fall immeasurably short of our first-rate doubles.

The fathers of the present gentlemen of France were too busily employed by their

military-minded emperor, to admit of their having any leisure time for instilling a love of field sports into the minds and bosoms of their offspring ; this part of the youth's education was entrusted to the *garde de chasse*, (a functionary as unlike an English gamekeeper as a horse-chesnut is to a chesnut horse) from whom they learnt nothing but the elements of poaching ;—such as the art of shooting a hare in her form, netting partridges, (*la chasse à la tirasse*,) and popping at larks as they hover over a piece of polished walnut wood, or looking-glass, twisted about by a long cord, held by a little urchin in a fallow-field ; this manly pastime is called *la chasse au miroir* ; and next to having the larks ready roasted, I know not a surer method of securing this diminutive dainty.

Some encouragement should be held out by the French Government for the

emigration of some few scores of efficient gamekeepers from this country, to teach the ideas of their would-be "chasseur" how to shoot, as well as their guns; and then, perhaps, they would, in course of time, behave more like sportsmen in the field, of which, I grieve to say, they have not the remotest idea.

A French gentleman thinks not that he infringes upon established etiquette, if he fire right across you, at a bird or hare on your side; and the moment he *has* fired, and by accident knocked over the bird or hare, he will run to pick it up, before he has loaded, little heeding the probability of putting up the rest of the covey; and if he happen to wound a hare, away he goes after it with his cur at his heels, hallooing like a maniac broke loose from Bedlam; and woe to the unhappy partridges in winter, above all should there be a bountiful fall of snow, for they are certain of

being picked off, one by one, or perhaps *en masse*, by the merciless proprietor of the estate.

I am certain, if any French gentleman, possessing a moderate number of acres, were to take half the pains our landholders do to preserve their game, and give the birds fair law, he would, in a very short time, have as good preserves as any county in England could boast of. But while I say that there is an abundance of birds to be met with in France, I must also admit, that the facilities afforded to all classes for destroying them are so great, that no extraordinary havoc can be committed, such as we are accustomed to hear of in Norfolk, Suffolk, and other favoured spots.

Every man in France who can command the sum of fifteen francs may shoot, I had almost said, everywhere. It is true, one now and then meets with a board,

stuck up in a conspicuous spot on an estate, with the prohibitory words, "*Chasse réservée*" printed on it, in bold black letters; but I can vouch for it, that the caution is as little heeded as a prohibition which meets the eye of the perambulator in every bye-corner of this metropolis; in fact, the result, in both instances, is the same.

In spite, however, of all these disadvantages, there is very good bird-shooting to be met with in France; and having made these prefatory observations, which I trust will not be deemed misplaced, I will proceed to point out where the best partridge-shooting is to be found, within a reasonable distance from the shores of the opposite coast.

I will begin with the "Pas de Calais," wherein the sportsman inclined to roam from his own country may meet with tolerable sport. I do not promise him a "battue," as at Holkham, but a very fair

sprinkling of birds. I would advise his being the bearer of an introductory letter to one or more of the resident English at St. Omer, who will secure him a good day's amusement in the environs. Captain Legge, who was formerly in the Scotch Greys, is an excellent sportsman, and so is Mr. Poguey Powell; but the most indefatigable of all, and consequently the most successful, is Mr. Samuel Kentish, who knows every inch of the country; he is a first-rate shot, and a keen sportsman, and, unlike many brothers of the gun, is ever ready to shew his friends where the birds are to be found. Mr. Bryan is, I believe, a good sportsman, and has done great execution for miles around St. Omer. I have not the honour of his acquaintance, but report says he is no mean proficient; and if rumour can be relied on, Parson Liptrop, at Calais, knows where to find a covey whenever he pleases,

not a great many miles from this Anglo-Gallican sea-port. This kind-hearted divine is a disciple of old Izaak Walton's, to boot, as the streams near to La Recourse could tell, for he has thinned them of their trout with true piscatorial skill.

My old friend Mr. Powell lives about four miles from St. Omer, at a village called Esquerdes, in which a royal manufactory of gunpowder is established. If this jolly knight of the trigger, and his pretty little wife, and fascinating sisters, are not blown up, I earnestly recommend any sportsman to seek the acquaintance of Mr. *Poels*, as the Frenchmen have christened him, and he will find him as pleasant a companion over a bottle of the comet vintage, as he is in the field.

My friend "Poels" has some splendid dogs; one, a white Irish setter, by name "Pat," beyond all price; he is the best dog, save one, I ever shot over. There is very good shooting all around Esquerdes

(and capital trout fishing too), but Mr. Kentish's favourite ground is at Terrouhanes, about a league and a half to the eastward of St. Omer, which is decidedly a good line of country. At the back of Blandeques, about three miles in a south-westerly direction, I have found several coveys, and I can assure my brother-sportsmen that a visit to the old fortified town of St. Omer will amply repay them, should they be undecided where to kill their birds and their time. The expense is nothing ; and should the sportsman be fortunate enough to be acquainted with any one of the very pleasant families domiciled there, I will answer for his thanking me for the hint.

The society at St. Omer is particularly good. I could name one or two families whose qualities would shed a lustre upon any *réunion* in the kingdom ; their hospitality, kindness, and intellectual ac-

quirements, are unbounded, which augment, in no slight degree, the regret their acquaintances must, one and all, feel on leaving them.

Should the wandering sportsman be induced to prolong his stay till the month of October, or November, I would advise his submitting to be jolted in the diligence as far as *Montreuil sur Mer*, also in the *Pas de Calais*. Some of the best cock-shooting in France is to be found in the neighbourhood ; and in the marshy ground at the foot of the mount upon which this strongly fortified town is built, the snipe shooter will find ample employment for his skill. The cocks, however, are the principal attraction here, and in proof of their abundance, I have only to state that the numerous and savoury *patés de Bécasses*, which Mr. Morel, of Piccadilly, supplies to the gnostic *gastronomes* of London, are made at Montreuil by the cele-

brated cook of the no less celebrated Hotel d'Angleterre, kept by Madame Mallet, who can boast of having given birth to the first of omelette makers, the talented *chef* of the Hotel de l'Europe at Abbeville.

Taking for granted that the traveller will follow my advice, and beat the alders for the cocks, I would go so far as to persuade him to push on as far as Abbeville, where, I can answer for it, he will be well rewarded for his trouble; the diligence will convey him thither, in somewhat less than four hours, for a very moderate sum.

One of two of these ponderous vehicles is under the superintendence of the merriest of *conducteurs* that ever beguiled a way-worn traveller. This jolly, chubby son of Momus, if you chime in with his humour, will sing you, in his snug *imperial* on the roof, the wittiest of tawdry songs, drink *gouttes*, and smoke cigars; to say no-

thing of divers amorous adventures, in which he, of course, figures as the hero. He is a portly, good-looking fellow, and a very devil amongst the girls, with whom he is an amazing favourite. I have travelled frequently with him, and wiled away many a joyous hour. On the last occasion, an interval of several months had elapsed, and on reaching Montreuil I was not a little pleased, on taking my seat in the *coupé*, to find my old acquaintance of the road. The merry fellow recognised me directly, and with a significant motion of his dexter thumb over the shoulder, and a roguish leer, asked me if I would like to mount into the imperial. The invitation was irresistible.

I left my snug corner in the *coupé*, and by the help of a rickety ladder reached the favoured spot. Here did I ensconce myself, and was soon joined by the portly commander-in-chief of the cumbersome

vehicle. As we jolted along, my facetious friend beguiled the way, as was his wont, with songs, anecdotes, adventures, and recitals of amorous doings. At intervals he complained sadly of the hardness of the times and the scarcity of money,—“*ce diable d'argent*,” as he termed it. “*Apropos*,” said he, “*je vous chanterai une chanson sur ce diable d'argent ;*” and he forthwith chaunted the following song, which I wrote down *verbatim* in my note-book :—

“ DIABLE D'ARGENT.

“ Parmi tous les Diables connus  
On distingue quelques bons Diables,—  
Diables boiteux, Diables cornus,  
Que l'Hymen a rendus traitables  
Sous les traits de Vénus ; souvent  
On voit des Diables fort aimables ;  
Mais le meilleur de tous les Diables  
C'est les fameux Diable d'Argent.”

“ *N'est ce pas, Monsieur ?*” said the jolly songster, at the conclusion of his merry

stave—" *Allons! la goutte*"—whereupon the bottle was applied to, and I drank his health in a diminutive glass of cognac, which Mr. Morel himself could not surpass, if equal.

There are fewer English sportsmen at Abbeville than at St. Omer. I never knew but two—Captain Rose, of the Navy, and Captain Jenkins, of the old 11th Light Dragoons. One only remains, for the latter, my kind friend and boon companion, died in Paris about three years since. A better fellow never pulled a trigger.

There is some excellent partridge-shooting to be met with all around Abbeville; and the landed proprietors, as well as the farmers, are proverbially liberal and kind in granting permission to their friends, and even strangers, to shoot on their estates. Should any one of my brother sportsmen have the pleasure of being acquainted with Captain Rose, he will be

sure of good sport, for the gallant sailor knows whereabouts the coveys do lie, but is rather chary of his information, unless the inquirer happen to be a very old friend. His favourite beat is distant some eight or ten miles from the town, near St. Riquet—a famous country, where I have repeatedly had some surprisingly good sport. I have occasionally met with equally great success in the opposite direction, between Abbeville and St. Vallery-sur-Somme; in fact, there is no lack of birds the whole of the way towards this beautiful little watering-place, of which I shall speak presently.

The lover of snipe-shooting will be in his element at Abbeville. With the exception of one swamp in Canada, I know not any spot equal to the marshes running parallel with the river Somme, between Abbeville and Amiens. Reader, they are full of snipe, in proof of which I have only

to state that I have never gone out without killing my eight or nine couple, and on one occasion I bagged seven-and-twenty couple and a half before two o'clock in the day. The swamp in question commences about a mile and a half from the town, on the Beauvais road.

I would recommend the reader to cross the Somme at a ferry he will find at the distance I have named, and shoot for about three miles on to Pont Remi, then to beat his way back again on the other side of some turf pits he will find at the end of a commune, (*Anglice*, common,) and if on his return to the aforesaid ferry he have not bagged ten couple of fine, full-grown snipe, his gun cannot shoot straight, for I will promise him thirty shots.

In beating the swamp, about a mile on this side of Pont Remi, a large chateau on the left hand will be observed ; it skirts

the high road which bisects the property. On the left of the road up to the rising ground is a very tolerably-sized wood, well stocked with rabbits, and there is excellent partridge and quail shooting all over the estate. This belongs to Monsieur de Vadicourt, of Abbeville; the chateau itself is seldom inhabited by the family, but the land is strictly preserved. Monsieur de Vadicourt fils, is very fond of shooting, and is to be found about three days in the week in the swamp at the back of his father's seat.

I would advise any knight of the trigger, in the event of his visiting Abbeville, to scrape acquaintance with the son, and perchance he may obtain leave to pop at the rabbits. I blush to write it, but I *have* slaughtered a few *without* permission of the noble owner, for I discovered that upon the days the young master remained in town I could, by means of a *loan* to the

garde de chasse, (a covetous old hunks,) blaze away to my heart's content. *Verbum sat.*

Brother sportsmen, as we are at Abbeville I cannot let pass the opportunity of introducing you to a most useful, talented, and renowned personage—one Monsieur Duflos; he is known by reputation all over France as the celebrated maker of waterproof boots—but, then, such boots! not the great, clumsy, awkward, heavy buckets which we are wont to see in this country, but an exquisitely-made, soft, pliable, comfortable glove-like casing for the extremities; they are, in truth, worth a journey to Abbeville to behold. The fame of this son of Crispin is imperishable; his name will *last* for ever! In sober truth, you may pull his boots on like a silk stocking; they are, of course, rather stouter in substance towards the sole, but diminishing in thickness upwards to the

thigh until they taper off to fit the haunches, and of a suppleness withal which is perfectly astonishing. They are impervious to wet ; I have walked in them through swamp and rivulet for hours, and have stood in them above my knees trout fishing for half a day, and my feet have been as dry on my return home as if they had never left the slipper or the fireside.

Of a verity Duflos is a marvellously good bootmaker, and so thought the Emperor Napoleon, for his Imperial Majesty would never wear a boot made by any one else. The price of the water-proofs, of best quality, is from thirty-five to forty francs ; a couple of pair will last a man his life, and they are cheap at any sum ; they are so light and comfortable that I have used them for partridge-shooting when the dew and damp on the potatoes and turnips would have soaked through any ordinary gear.

The snipe shooter cannot do better than make trial of Abbeville, and I anticipate his thanks when he returns. Lodgings are very reasonable and very good. Monsieur Schmidt, who keeps a *café* on the Grande Place, will put a stranger in the way of procuring comfortable apartments. Monsieur Petit, a hatter in the Grande Rue, has very nice rooms ; but for a short visit I should advise my brother sportsmen to take up their quarters at the *Tête de Bœuf*, kept by Monsieur Le Dray, where they will find every comfort, moderate charges, and an excellent *table d'hôte*. The younger Le Dray is a sportsman in *his* way, and will, I am sure, shew any customer the marshes ; but the guide I would recommend is one Isidore Lefort, a *chasseur* by profession, who supplies M. Le Dray's table with game of all kinds.

This useful individual lives in the Faubourg St. Giles, on the road to the swamp,

and will, for a trifling consideration, shew a stranger the whereabouts for the snipe. He is a good shot, a bit of a poacher, and an indefatigable tramper. My friend Lefort has generally a good dog or two to dispose of, and tolerably well broken, only for snipe or wild fowl mind, for they are not worth a dump in the field.

For a bachelor I think the hotel plan the pleasanter of the two, especially, as I have before said, if his stay be short ; if, however, he prefer a lodging, he can either dine at a *table d'hôte*, or have his dinner provided by a *traiteur*. There is an excellent cook of the feminine gender, a *traiteuse*, in fact, who dwelleth opposite the cathedral, and who sends out dinners to her *pratiques* at a ridiculously low price. This plan may suit the *solitaire*, who feeds, like a Brahmin of high caste, in private, but, having a gregarious turn, I give the preference to the *table d'hôte*.

There is an excellent one on the Grande Place at the *Lion Noir* ; the terms by the month are seventy-five francs for breakfast and dinner ; but the casual frequenter, whose stay may not admit of such an arrangement, will have to pay one franc for the former meal and two for the latter. With regard to lodgings, the price varies from thirty to forty francs per month ; for a sitting-room and bed-room, attendance, plate, linen, and the use of a kitchen, the former sum will be asked. I lived for a couple of years in Abbeville, and occupied the upper part of a house belonging to Monsieur Schmidt, near the Hotel de l'Europe. I had a salon, three bedrooms, and a kitchen, all *en suite*, a loft for my dogs, and other conveniences ; for these apartments I paid forty-five francs a month, but I had servants to lodge as well as myself. A single man, without an attendant, will find a very comfortable

lodging for thirty or five-and-thirty francs a month.

I cannot impress too strongly upon the mind of the sportsman who may feel inclined to shoot in *foreign parts*, the necessity of providing himself with shooting tackle of every description ere he quit the shores of England, and, above all, let him be accompanied by his dogs. A thoroughly-broken setter, that will take water and retrieve, will be found invaluable in the marshes around Abbeville and in the bay of St. Valery for wild fowl shooting.

With regard to powder, the best that is now issued from the royal manufactory of France will be found to answer every purpose ; it is sufficiently strong ; it fouls, probably, a little, but *very* little, more than ours, and it is, consequently, hardly worth the attempt to smuggle over any of this strictly-prohibited article.

I would most earnestly, and in the true spirit of friendship, recommend the travelling shooter to avoid what are mis-called first-rate hotels, and first-quality wines ; both *are impositions*. This caution is addressed more particularly to the sportsman in a state of single blessedness, travelling without his own equipage and a retinue of servants. The titled and the wealthy are unquestionably justified in seeking for every luxury and comfort ; they can afford to pay for civility and attention, and have, moreover, a prescriptive right to be pillaged ; but to the solitary individual, with only his *sac de nuit*, his gun-case and dressing-case, *the case is widely different*.

If on landing at Calais he go, for fashion's sake, or by recommendation, to Desseiw's or Quillac's, he will find himself in the enjoyment of splendid misery, consigned to a comfortless room, in all

probability without a fire, which, if he be fortunate, may be lighted in about three-quarters of an hour, after having sounded some scores of "treble-bob majors" by a vigorous application to the bell-rope. Attendance is out of the question ; and if, like a greenhorn, he dine in his own room, I would recommend him a number of the New Monthly to fill up the time that will elapse between the courses served at the caprice of the *garçon*.

The best and the cheapest house in Calais is Houtin's Hotel de Londres. He was formerly head cook at Desseiw's, and is a *chef* of first-rate pretensions ; he is decidedly the best artist in Calais, and his charges are exceedingly moderate—surprisingly so ; and for comfort, this unpretending little hotel is not to be surpassed.

At St. Omer, the best hotel (I mean the most comfortable) is the Canon d'Or, kept by Pacquet, père. I have heard, by the

way, that this house has been closed, and that the *maitre d'hôtel* has removed to the Grande St. Catherine, in the Rue du Commandant ; but wherever père Pacquet is, there will be the best fare, for as a *chef* he is renowned all over the country.

The Ancienne Poste is an excellent hotel—that is, if you travel in your own carriage, but if you pack yourself in a diligence, you may look in vain for attention, civility, or comfort, in a first-rate house ; there are exceptions, but they are rarely to be met with.

The Hotel de l'Europe, at Abbeville, is a splendid establishment, but *rather* dear. Young Mallet, however, is assiduous to please all his customers, but his *garçons* have the prevailing epidemic of devoting their exclusive attention to the traveller who arrives *en poste* in preference to the patronizer of diligences. To the person of moderate ambition as well as means,

the Tête de Bœuf will afford very snug quarters.

The port of St. Vallery-sur-Somme is distant from Abbeville only twelve miles, and for the sum of two francs the visitor will be conveyed thither in the *malle poste*—a vehicle resembling a huge wooden box upon wheels, and the angular quadruped doomed to the diurnal task of shuffling to and fro with the mail bags and passengers is about as antiquated as the crazy carriage itself. I know of no better cure for dyspepsia than riding in this bone-setter from Abbeville to St. Vallery before breakfast. The Somme discharges itself into the sea here, and nothing can be more enchanting than the surrounding scenery. The bay is picturesque in the extreme—Naples in miniature. Lodgings are plentiful, and *were* tolerably cheap; but since two steam-boats have commenced running from London to this

charming little sea-port, the inhabitants may, as others have done before them, both in England and France, have increased their demands. The hotel is an excellent one, admirably conducted by a widow and two Patagonian daughters ; the cuisine and wines unexceptionable.

I know not of any trip to be undertaken, especially by the sportsman, that can afford so much gratification, for a very small sum, as this from the Thames to the Somme. In the winter, the bay is swarming with wild-fowl ; and the months of September and October will afford the unambitious partridge-shooter as much amusement as he can desire. The lovers of quail, too, will be highly gratified, for they will find this delicate bird in perfection and profusion.

It is to be hoped the steam-boats will continue to run to the sea-port town of St. Vallery during the winter months, for

then the wild-fowl shooter will find himself, for the sum of one pound fifteen shillings, in the very best country for the indulgence of his favourite sport that I ever met with. The bay of St. Vallery, as I have already observed, literally swarms with the duck tribe, in all its variety, during the winter months; and the lagoons in the neighbourhood, towards the sea, are visited in myriads by these delicious migratories.

This spot may truly be called the national *depôt* for ducks, widgeon, and teal; for the Parisian market is supplied from St. Vallery and its environs, and also from the swamps and marshes around Abbeville. The shores of the romantic little bay of St. Vallery, as well as the lagoons on the sea coast, are thronged by the inhabitants in the winter, and many an owner of an old rusty flint gun has earned a sufficient sum in severe weather to sup-

port himself and his family for the six succeeding months.

If that prince of sportsmen, Colonel Hawker, could be induced to transport himself to St. Vallery, together with his admirable punt, fitted up with his swivel gun, I think he would not only astonish the natives, but be astonished himself at the countless quantities of wild fowl there congregated ; I will answer for it he never saw anything to equal it either in the neighbourhood of the Lymington waters, or Poole ; in short, to the sportsman, the quiet, little, unpretending town of St. Vallery possesses attractions of a superior order.

I lived there for some months, not many years ago, and can with truth assert that I never passed my time more agreeably. The inhabitants of this little watering place are unaffectedly kind and hospitable. The society is composed of

merchants, traders, and officers of the customs ; they give little musical parties at each other's houses, and once a-week meet with their families at a subscription-room, and trip it on the light fantastic toe, at something about tenpence a-head, refreshments included. A bachelor, if he be a susceptible subject, will run the risk of losing his heart here, for the young ladies possess attractions of no common order ; some two or three I could name are exceedingly fascinating, and surpassingly agreeable, as well as good-looking.

There are some exceedingly pleasant families at St. Valery, and the *chasseur* who may visit its shores will find two or three excellent fellows there, who will cheerfully shew him the best shooting ground, and make his stay amongst them excessively pleasant. Of the single-hearted bachelors I may make mention,

*inter alia*, of my old friend Jules de Coges ; he is a jolly fellow, loves his glass and his lass, sings a good song, plays the fiddle, and, in short, is a right pleasant companion. He holds a situation in the customs, and, for a Frenchman, is really a very fair sportsman ; he has a good dog, too, and they both do their work very creditably. Monsieur de Coges shoots steadily and well, and possesses more coolness than any of his countrymen I ever met with. Should any one of my readers feel induced to run over to St. Valery, and, above all, if he be fond of a cigar, a glass of grog, and a little *full-dressed conversation*, he cannot do better than cultivate Jules de Coges's acquaintance. I know he will thank me for the introduction ; but if he be bashful, let him come to me, and I will give him a letter to this prince of good fellows. A merrier com-

panion never blew a cloud or cracked a bottle, and he cares not for the small hours.

An old half-pay officer, a Mr. Dunn, has been a resident for some years ; he is a tolerable sportsman, and is looked upon by the inhabitants as one of themselves. To those who wish for quiet, combined with economy, this secluded little watering-place possesses advantages rarely to be met with ; and I have heard that since the steam-boats have commenced running between London and this port, that a diligence has been established to convey the passengers to Abbeville,—a blessing of no little magnitude to those who have been doomed to a bumping in the *malle poste* of former days, without springs.

During my stay at St. Valery I occupied apartments *chez Madame Buè*. Her house is the best in the place, and most delightfully situated, facing the bay ; and

if any of my readers should ever visit this fascinating spot, they cannot do better than lodge under her roof, if it were only to hear her parrot talk ; for, of a verity, *Coco* is the most marvellous bird I ever met with.

### CHAPTER III.

Partridge-shooting in the neighbourhood of Dieppe  
—La Ville d'Eu—Vassonville—Madame La  
Duchesse de Berri—Sport at Blangy—How to  
catch a pike—And when caught, how to dress  
and carve him.

SOME eighteen months prior to my meeting with Mr. W—— at Brighton, in 1830, and which led to my accompanying him to Dieppe, it so happened that I was on a visit at Abbeville, having run over from St. Omer, to try the swamp for snipe. Capt. P—— and Mr. W—— having heard of my

being in their neighbourhood, wrote me a pressing invitation to join them at *La Ville d'Eu*, and shoot in the preserves of the then Duke of Orleans—his Royal Highness (now Louis Philippe) having condescendingly granted us permission to shoot on his estate whenever we pleased. This was a proposal too tempting to be resisted, and on the appointed day I started, *en Berline*, from Abbeville, for the royal preserves, and joined my friends at the hotel of this pretty little town, which faces the gates leading to the park and chateau.

This delightful residence is distant not more than sixteen or eighteen miles from Dieppe, and the drive is picturesque and beautiful in the extreme. We were waited upon by the head keeper almost immediately after our arrival, who informed us that his helpers were in attendance, and all *préparatifs* had been made for our re-

ception. After a slight refection, we put our guns together, and set off for the preserves, in the hope of doing wonders. Having declined the proffered aid of divers *chiens de chasse*, we took with us a brace of Captain P——'s Leicestershire black-and-tan pointers, a setter of Mr. W——'s, and another, a fine old staunch dog, of my own.

Mr. W——'s setter was a superlatively handsome animal, and looked so promising that I was induced to inquire where he had purchased him, and how much might have been given. I could not obtain any direct reply to the questions, and from the sly glances which were exchanged between my two companions, it was evident there was some mystery appertaining to this said dog, "Merlin," and Captain P—— put me in possession of the secret, over our wine, in the evening. We repaired to the park, and took

some ground to the right of the chateau, and found a tolerable sprinkling of birds, but certainly not in such numbers as we had been led to expect.

As I am not particularly fond of shooting in company, I quitted my companions, and betook myself to some lowland, skirting a line of forest, and found, as I had anticipated, that my brother chasseurs, on the high ground behind me, were driving the birds down to the spot where I was beating. My pockets consequently were sooner and better filled than those of my fellow-countrymen. The slaughter was not very great—I bagged nine brace and a half of birds, and a leash of hares; Capt. P——, six brace and a half of birds, and a brace of hares; Mr. W——, six brace of birds and one hare; so that altogether we returned to our snug little *auberge* tolerably well pleased with our day's sport.

As we were sipping our wine in the evening, the history of "Merlin," Mr. W——'s new (I cannot call it purchase, but) *acquisition*, was related to me. It came to pass that Mr. W—— had occasion to run up to Paris about six weeks before the meeting I am recording, and while at the *Hotel des Etrangers*, in the rue Vivienne, an enterprising, enthusiastic, liberty-loving young gentleman, fired with ardour, was on his route to join a Quixotic expedition, together with some Spanish patriots, and was lodging in the same house.

This hero was loquacious, and in his verbosity let fall certain boastings touching a marvellously good setter, of great price and value, and which setter was to accompany these adventurers to the land of garlic. Great were the feats this dog had performed in Suffolk ; a better never stood a bird, or beat a cover, and as for

the water, no Newfoundland of the true breed ever equalled him. All this was not lost upon my wary friend, as the owner extolled the qualities of his quadruped at the *table d'hôte*, and losing sight of the honest principle of *meum* and *tuum*, a base plot was laid for abducting the wonderful setter—which scheme succeeded but too well. Monsieur T—— G——, the celebrated marine painter, was enlisted as a confederate, and by dint of a liberal bribe to the *garçon d'écurie*, the animal was, in the dead of the night, safely deposited in the *atelier* of the artist.

Many and sad were the wailings and lamentations on the part of the master when the loss was discovered the following morning. My friend W——, with an Iago-like hypocrisy, recommended that the dog should be cried and hand-bills posted, with the double motive of disarm-

ingsuspicion, and ascertaining the name of the dog, of which he was at the time in ignorance. This was done, but, as may be imagined, "Merlin" was not forthcoming.

After fruitless inquiries and searches, the patriotic gentleman gave up all hopes of recovering his dog, and only lamented to Mr. W—— that so good and useful an animal should fall into the hands of a d—d Frenchman ; for rather than see him sacrificed in such a manner, and in possession of a foreigner who could not appreciate his merits, he assured my friend that *he would have given the dog to him.* Mr. W—— very coolly replied that he would *take the will for the deed.*

For the few days that Mr. W—— remained in Paris, prior to his return to Dieppe, this knight-errant and himself were on the most sociable terms ; indeed, the young gentleman expressed himself

delighted at having formed the acquaintance, and never omitted an opportunity of paying Mr. W—— every attention and civility, so much so that he *would* see him to the diligence when returning to Dieppe. This exuberance of affection could well have been dispensed with, for how was “Merlin” to be disposed of? Here was a sad difficulty. My friend begged that his new acquaintance would not trouble himself, and drove in a *fiacre* to Mr. T. G——’s, for the purpose of fetching the dog, and then to the *messagerie royale*, from whence the cumbrous vehicle was to start.

As the coach drew up in the courtyard, who should thrust his head through the window but the ex-owner of Merlin! What was to be done? The dog was at Mr. W——’s feet, and a bark of recognition would inevitably have betrayed the purloiner. Mr. W—— was suddenly seized with a violent cold, and begged of

his over-civil friend to run to a druggist's for some *jujubes*. While the unsuspecting dupe was executing the commission, Merlin was magically transferred from the fiacre to the imperial of the diligence, and, thanks to his new master's ingenuity and knavery, was safely transported to Dieppe, and the preserves at La Ville d'Eu.

I may here add that Merlin was all his former master had described him, although occasionally wild and ungovernable ; but, for general shooting, was as good a dog, and certainly as *cheap* a one, as any reasonable man need have desired.

This peculating recital was amusing enough, although it did not say much for my friend's honesty. After all, however, in the eyes of a sportsman, the act may be deemed excusable, though certainly not justifiable ; for the dog would have been thrown away on this modern Don Quixote, and perhaps have come to an untimely

end, without benefiting any one, and Merlin's acquirements were of too superior a nature to allow of his being in untutored hands; under the particular circumstances of the case, *perhaps* I might have been tempted into doing the same. Merlin is at this moment in Brittany, the pride of his master and the admiration of the natives\*—but *revenons à nos moutons*.

On the following day we were prevented by the weather from venturing beyond the threshold; the wind and the rain set us at defiance, and we were fain compelled to seek amusement within doors.

In the evening, while we were washing down our repast with some thin claret, we

\* In justice to my friend, Mr. W——, I am bound to say that he left a letter at the *Hotel des Etrangers* for his newly-formed acquaintance, explaining all the circumstances touching the abduction of the dog, and enclosing a cheque on Lafitte's for three hundred francs—certainly more than the dog was worth *in France*.

were informed that a *chasseur* requested an audience of *Messieurs les Anglais*. He was admitted forthwith. After divers well-turned apologies for the intrusion, the purport of his visit was explained. Having heard that we had arrived on a shooting excursion, he had called for the purpose of offering his services as guide to some extensive marshes, where, according to his account, the snipe were in great abundance ; and as the swamp was seldom visited by any amateurs but himself, he promised us excellent sport. After rewarding our informant with a trifling *douceur* for his civility, and comforting his inward man with half a tumbler of *veritable Cognac*, he was dismissed, with a promise on my own part of meeting him the following day at a given spot, wind and weather permitting.

If I have a failing, it is being inordinately fond of snipe-shooting, so I per-

mitted my companions to depart without me the next day, they betaking themselves to the Duke of Orleans' preserves, while I bent my way to the marshes.

I met my *chasseur* at the place appointed, and in about three quarters of an hour reached the swamp. To my exceeding joy, I found the birds in great abundance, and had excellent sport. In addition to the snipe, the marsh contained a very satisfactory sprinkling of the golden plover, and by dint of much stratagem and caution, I succeeded in killing a few. These dainty birds are difficult to approach, and the shooter might as well hope to catch them by sprinkling salt on their tails, as to get a shot by walking up to them in a straight line.

To succeed in getting them within range of the gun, you must describe some few circles, reducing the circumference of each progressively, until you can make

sure of a shot. This manœuvre may savour of pot hunting, especially if the birds be fired at before they take wing. I blush to write it, but I *have* sinned in this way, (in plover-shooting,) but I hold it to be a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance.

I contrived (no matter how,) to kill four brace and a half of plover, and eleven couple of snipe on this day. My fellow-countrymen were no less fortunate, and I found them in high glee on my return to the *Auberge of La Ville d'Eu*. They had killed upwards of twenty brace of birds and a *chevreuil*.

While partaking of a late dinner, with appetites such as sportsmen alone are blessed with, an emissary from Dieppe (sent expressly,) informed us of the arrival of *Madame la Duchesse de Berri*. This circumstance, not wholly unexpected, put a stop for a time to our operations, as

Mr. W——, who had rented a farm with a tenantable mansion at Vassonville, (a little hamlet situated between *La Ville d'Eu* and *Treport*,) was under a promise to exhibit some English sheep to her Royal Highness, on her arrival at her favourite bathing place.

On the following morning Captain P—— and myself returned *en poste* to Dieppe, leaving Mr. W—— to proceed to Vassonville, for the purpose of giving instructions to his *homme d'affaires* to have everything in readiness for her Royal Highness's reception.

On paying our respects to this amiable and unfortunate lady, we were most graciously received, and her Royal Highness was pleased to fix an early day for visiting my friend Mr. W——, at his country-seat. The preparations made for entertaining the illustrious guest were on a scale of magnificence and liberality that

astonished even Captain P—— and myself. The talents of the different *chefs* and *restaurants* in Dieppe were called into action for the occasion. Marquees and tents were forwarded, to be erected on the lawn in front of the house. The commanding-officer of the regiment *en garnison* had politely offered the use of his band, in addition to which a very efficient orchestra was provided for the dancers : in short, neither pains nor expense were spared to give *eclat* to this entertainment.

The day was most propitious, and about twelve o'clock her Royal Highness and suite, comprising a numerous staff, were received by my hospitable friend. The party was an unusually large one ; but such was the tact and good generalship displayed in the arrangements, that there was room for all, and all were alike pleased with the zealous attention of their

host. This elegant *dejeuner* was partaken of under canvas, and after the *champagne* had circulated pretty freely, the English sheep were paraded in front of the tent for the inspection of the royal visitor. Madame La Duchesse expressed herself highly pleased with the John Bull-like appearance of the *moutons*; and her delight was as unaffected as sincere, when Mr. W—— presented her Royal Highness with a male and two females of South-down extraction: they were instantly forwarded to *Rosny*, the favourite country residence of this exiled princess. This beautiful property was purchased in 1831 by an Englishman, one Mr. Johnson, or Thompson, at a very high price.

Her Royal Highness had heard of the interruption to our sport, and kindly rebuked Mr. W—— for having allowed his politeness to interfere with our *partie de chasse*, for she frankly confessed she could

not have exercised her self-denial to such an extent, being *folle pour la chasse* herself; and to convince us of her sincerity, her Royal Highness requested us to meet her on the following day, with our guns and dogs, in the neighbourhood of La Ville d'Eu, to which proposition we most readily assented.

After the exhibition of the *moutons Anglais*, we assembled on a platform at the end of the lawn, and danced quadrilles until (in the language of the Morning Post) “night threw his sable mantle over the festive scene, when the party broke up,” and we returned to Dieppe, where the Duchess received the authorities at an evening party, who came to pay their respects to the royal visitor.

On the following morning Captain P——, Mr. W——, and myself, were up betimes, and proceeded to the neighbourhood of La Ville d'Eu, where her Royal

Highness had appointed to meet us. The Duchess did not make her appearance until one o'clock ; she came on horse-back, attended by two Aides du Camp, with others of her suite, in a carriage. An elaborately-worked *blouse* peeped from under the riding-habit, which, when taken off, displayed the slight elastic and well-moulded figure of our illustrious companion *en chasseur*, or, more properly speaking, *en chasseuse*. A light and beautifully-finished gun was taken from the carriage, and we started off with our modern Diana for a field where we had marked down a covey of birds in some turnips.

Her Royal Highness appeared to be highly delighted with our dogs, and was loud in her commendations of their steadiness, backing, &c. Our fair and noble friend acquitted herself admirably, and killed the first bird she fired at. The

Duchess had five shots, certainly not more, and brought down a leash of partridges.

Some fastidious persons may condemn this as an unfeminine amusement, but much, in my humble opinion, depends upon the *manner* in which any deviation from the prescribed laws of society is attempted. In this instance, there was nothing to offend the most rigid or refined moralist: the whole proceeding was conducted in the most harmless, unpretending manner, and carried on with a bewitching *naïveté*, and with a dignified ease which forbad the slightest thought of anything derogatory to feminine delicacy.

The *Duchesse de Berri* is one of the most amiable persons breathing; and did the nature of this little work admit of my entering upon political discussions, I *could* defend her conduct, however much

her maternal love may have misled her in an unequal struggle with her ambitious opponents. A mother surely can never be blamed for endeavouring to maintain the rights of her child in opposition to (what she may, justly or not, conceive to be) usurpation. The struggle in La Vendée was unquestionably useless and ill-advised, and she has to thank her bigoted relative, Charles the Tenth, and his inflexible minister, Polignac, for all the discomfort she has endured.

How his most Christian Majesty, who was *fou pour la chasse*, could give up his splendid shooting and hunting, is to me astonishing. I should have thought he would rather have changed his ministers once a week than have foregone his favourite diversion.

The poor Duchess, however, has been sadly calumniated and buffeted about; some of her malignant assailants have

stigmatized her recent marriage as indelicate. It is cowardly to trample on a fallen foe ; how much the more so must it be when the foe happens to be a defenceless female, advocating the cause of a prince, and that prince an only son. Her best friends, however, must admit that it would have been as well had the duchess remained in a state of single blessedness ; at least her persecutors would have been disarmed of half their calumny, and this amiable princess would have had less cause to repine at the reports so industriously circulated to her prejudice, and the publicity and notoriety given to her conduct.

It will ever be a source of gratification to me that Mr. W—— had an opportunity of evincing the sympathy he felt for the misfortunes of the Duchesse de Berri after the downfall of her royal brother-in-law. By

one of those extraordinary chances in human events, which fall to the lot of but few, Mr. W——, on his road to Paris, overtook a groom *in the royal livery* leading a favourite horse of this ill-starred lady: the man did not know my friend, and actually *offered the horse for sale!* Mr. W——, with a promptness and good feeling which redound in no slight degree to his credit, closed with the offer, bought the animal, and forwarded it to its noble mistress. The delicacy and tact by which this disinterested mark of esteem and respect was conveyed to the exiled princess, can only be appreciated by those who are acquainted with Mr. W——. But a truce to digression.

We returned to Dieppe in the evening, and had the honour of dining with her royal highness, who was kind enough to express herself much gratified by our politeness

and the hospitality of Mr. W——, whose *fête champêtre* the Duchess pronounced *magnifique*.

On the following morning we paid our respects to the Duchesse de Berri, for the purpose of taking leave of her royal highness, preparatory to returning to the preserves of La Ville d'Eu; and when we reached our hotel we found a messenger awaiting us, who was the bearer of a pressing invitation from Monsieur H——, the large landed proprietor of Blangy, whose estates are situated between Dieppe and Abbeville, and of whom I have made mention in a former chapter.

A council "of three" was held *instantér*, when it was carried *nem. con.* that instead of resuming our *chasse* at La Ville d'Eu, we should accept of the tempting offer so kindly conveyed to us. A joyful reply in the affirmative was therefore returned to the Chateau de Blangy, and at an early

hour on the succeeding morning we proceeded, *à pied*, to the hospitable mansion, having forwarded our carpet-bags by a *charrette*. We shot our way to our host's, where we arrived in time for supper, and for which sociable meal our walk had given us an enviable zest.

We experienced a most cordial welcome from our kind and hospitable friend, and we set to with becoming energy at the savoury viands spread before us. Great was the havoc we made at this well-spread board, and after washing down the ample repast with some delicious wine, we repaired to our luxurious beds, and slept soundly until roused by a sonorous bell in the morning, which announced to the inmates of the chateau that preparations were on foot for their *dejeuner*. With some difficulty I obtained a sufficient supply of water for my ablutions. A Frenchman has not the remotest idea

of the luxury of a foot-bath, water-tub, or sponges, but contents himself with dipping the corner of a smooth calico towel into a flat thing, miscalled a basin, but which bears more affinity to a pie-dish than any article of crockery I am acquainted with. The comfort attendant upon cleanliness of the person is perfectly unheeded, and a Frenchman's *toilette* is consequently completed in about five minutes. A facetious son of Gallia once, indeed, remarked, that *he thought I must be very dirty to require so much washing!*

Having achieved my sluicings, I proceeded to the *salle à manger*, where I found a numerous party assembled, busily engaged in discussing the dainties set before them. My fellow-countrymen and myself were not long in following so laudable an example, and by the time the appetizing condiments disappeared, preparations were on foot for sallying forth to the plains.

Much to the annoyance of Captain P——, Mr. W——, and myself, we were followed by a huge train of *pseudo sportsmen*, with a retinue of curs at their heels, and we could well have dispensed both with the masters and dogs. We had the satisfaction, however, of knowing the extraordinary superiority of our own quadrupeds, and being perfectly convinced that even the force of bad example could not spoil them, we became at length indifferent to this untimely interruption. Whenever one of our dogs was on a point, one or more of these infernal curs would leave the heels of their masters, and rush in upon the birds, and chase the covey for some distance, yelping a most discordant accompaniment all the time. Their stupid owners seemed quite delighted at the ardour of the brutes, and would frequently exclaim “*N'est ce pas qu'ils chassent bien!*”

We left these self-satisfied chasseurs alone in their glory as soon as we conve-

niently could, and committed great slaughter amongst the coveys, of which we found a very fair number. We (whereby I mean Capt. P——, Mr. W——, and myself) bagged six or seven-and-twenty brace of birds, and two brace of hares.

On our return to the chateau to dinner we found a large party assembled, the majority of whom had been invited by our worthy host to meet us; and as soon as we had changed our habiliments, and rendered our persons in a presentable state, we were introduced in due form to the new comers, by whom we were greeted with great urbanity and kindness. Among the guests, who were for the most part from the neighbourhood of Blangy, were a Monsieur and Madame C——, the husband a liberal—*dans toute la force du terme*—and the wife a coquette, to say nothing more.

For fear my discretion might be called in question, I will not commit to paper all I saw during my visit at the chateau and at the mansion of this lady and her radical husband. My friend W—— *could* let my readers into the secret, if he chose.

We enjoyed some remarkably good sport in this beautiful neighbourhood, and I earnestly recommend any of my countrymen who may pass through Dieppe in the month of September or October to shoot their way from thence to St. Valery or Abbeville, taking Blangy in their way. They will meet with abundance of game, and plenty of hospitality from the landholders. I have said that the landed proprietors are, to a certain, though very limited extent, tenacious of their game. All they look for is, to be paid the compliment of being *asked* for permission to shoot over their estates. Surely this is not exacting a great deal from the wandering sportsman ;

and, with due submission, I would exhort every Englishman, who may be induced to make trial of a little continental shooting, to leave his card at every chateau in his route, with an accompanying note to the Seigneur, requesting permission to shoot on his *terre*. I can promise the applicant that a most gracious answer will be returned in the affirmative, and nine times out of ten accompanied by an invitation to partake of *la fortune du pot* the following day, at two.

After passing four or five very pleasant days with our friend the *Deputé* and his affectionate wife, I took leave of my companions, and shot my way to Abbeville, while they returned to Dieppe, where they expected some draft hounds from Sussex, which were to be forwarded to Mr. Martin Hawke, at Tours, by Captain P——.

On my return to my old quarters, I found plenty of snipe in the marshes, and

had capital sport ; the swamp was full of birds, and it was during my visit to Abbeville on this occasion that I killed twenty-seven couple and a half before two o'clock in the day. If the sportsman wish to vary his amusement, and, moreover, if he be fond of pike-fishing, I can promise him plenty of employment in the turf pits which adjoin the swamps. These will be discovered in abundance, for they yield fuel to the major part of the poorer classes in the town.

A gentleman, by name Mazure, has a very extensive property in turf land, and on this profitable little estate will be found some pits of great depth and magnitude ; they are supplied by springs, as well as some small streams which run through the land. These gigantic ponds, which my friend Mr. Robins would (and might, without being accused of exaggeration) term lakes, are full of pike, and

I have killed some splendid fish in them.

In the choice of bait, the angler must, of course, be guided by circumstances: the most useful is the roach, and for live bait I think is decidedly the best; his skin is tougher than that of the gudgeon, and the strong coat of mail with which he is armed by nature, in the shape of scales, tends to preserve him on the hook longer than any other of the small fry.

For trolling, however, and where you have a plentiful supply at hand, the gudgeon is the better bait of the two. The most killing mode of exhibiting the live bait in holes and corners, where you suspect a pike is likely to be hid, is as follows:—I have never known it practised by any one else, and I claim the merit of the invention, however simple it may appear. Two or three days prior to that on which you propose to fish, cut some

half dozen of willow twigs, forked in this particular shape  $\Lambda$  ; pare off the bark, and on the second or third day they will be dry enough for use ; take about six yards of whipcord, fasten one end of the line on the top of the aforesaid biforked twig, for which purpose leave about two inches on your winder, and about half a yard of line to attach to your rod ; then wind your whipcord *in and out* on the twig ; when near the end of the line, make an incision at the end of one of the forks, for hitching it, leaving about a yard to attach to the wire or gyp of the hook, which must be a double one.

On your road to the pond, or still-water, where you purpose planting your lines, cut out of a hedge as many rods, about four or five feet long, as you may want, sharpening one end to stick in the bank overhanging the water. Then take a fine

lively roach, make a small incision with a sharp pen-knife to the right of the dorsal fin (taking care not to hurt the flesh unnecessarily), and another incision on the right shoulder, near the head ; pass the wire or gymp, beginning at the shoulder, under the skin, together with the hook, until the barbs only appear over the back of the bait ; then fasten your wire to the line, having the bait about a foot and a-half under the water, and secure your rod in the bank. The bait will have room to play, and this method of impaling him being much less painful than the antiquated system of passing the hooks through the flesh, he will be more lively, and consequently more attractive ; so much so that I have never known the plan to fail in any one instance. If a pike be within a mile of the spot he is sure to be taken. A roach will live all night in this way.

A curious circumstance occurred to my-

self some eight years ago, on Mr. Mazure's property, where he had given me permission to set my lines. I had nine of them in different holes and corners, and took seven fish. In pulling in one of the lines, with a small jack of two pounds at the end of it, a large pike of upwards of eight pounds seized the lesser one, as I was drawing towards the bank. I had my servant at my elbow with a landing-net, and before the voracious fresh-water shark quitted his hold, I succeeded in landing both.

Should any of my fellow-brethren of the angle do me the honour of trying my simple plan, I will undertake to ensure their success ; and, as a reward for their condescension, I will tell them how to dress a pike of eight pounds, should they be so fortunate as to take one.

Having well cleaned, emptied, and washed the fish, preserve the roe and liver ; take a French roll, cut off the

crust, and steep the crumb in half a pint of good cream ; shred finely some suet, (marrow is better) and chop some parsley, lemon-thyme, marjoram, common thyme, and lemon-peel, and one anchovy ; then chop the liver and roe of the pike (previously boiled) and mix the whole with the crumb of roll soaked in cream, and the yolks of two eggs to bind it together ; add pepper and salt to taste. Stuff the pike, sew up his belly, strew him with raspings, with here and there some butter, and put plenty of the latter article in the dish to baste him with. Send him to your baker, and while he is passing through the ordeal of the oven, prepare at home a good gravy, thickened with a *very little* essence of anchovy and the breast and entrails of a woodcock, pounded in a mortar.

The pike, when dressed in this way, is an *Epicurean morceau* which some scep-

tics have stigmatized as an unpalatable fish. This sweeping censure, I suspect, has arisen from their not knowing how it should be carved. Here is the secret. *The under part of the pike only is worth eating.* There is a brown horizontal line intersecting the fish, and higher than this the fish-slice should never venture, all above, and on the back, being full of forked bones, and fit only *for the curious in pick-ing.* The under part (by far the richest and best) is entirely free from this annoyance, and, with the aforesaid pudding and gravy, is very palatable, and, paradoxically speaking, a man could eat his own father with these *addenda.* But fearing my readers may tax me with being a disciple of Dr. Kitchener, rather than of old Izaak Walton, I will conclude the chapter with this valediction—"May good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both."

## CHAPTER IV.

Dieppe—Revolution of 1830—The memorable *trois jours*—Visit to Paris—Charles X.—Louis Philippe's *soirée*—Return to Dieppe—Departure for Higny—Description of the country—Vouilly—Monsieur le Curé—Journey from Higny to Guingamp, in Lower Brittany—Visit to Monsieur de C——'s chateau—Boar-shooting—Dreadful accident.

I REMAINED for a few weeks at Abbeville and returned to St. Omer, from whence I was called to England on business of importance; and it was in the month of April following that I accidentally met Mr. W—— at Brighton, and was induced

to accompany him to Dieppe, for the purpose of trout-fishing, as I have stated in a former chapter. Certain rumours of an *emeute* in Paris had reached the quiet little village of Arques towards the end of July, and on the 28th of the month the report was confirmed by the outbreak of the Revolution.

We were, as may be easily imagined, in a most unenviable state of suspense and disquietude during the memorable *trois jours*; and it was not until the 31st that our fears were dispelled. On the 1st of August, I was prompted by curiosity to accompany a Parisian gentleman to the capital, and I was fully compensated for my pains. The scene, however, which the metropolis of France presented, has been so fully and frequently described that I shall not occupy any portion of these pages by a repetition of the wonders I saw and heard of; but will

at once proceed to relate the events which were the result of my visit to Paris.

I have said that I had the honour of being personally known to the Duke of Orleans prior to his being called to the throne; and I had also the pleasure of being acquainted with some few of his royal highness's staff. I left my card at the Palais Royal, where his newly-elected majesty was residing, and experienced a warm and friendly greeting from his favourite aide-de-camp, Monsieur Le Colonel de R——. I had also the honour of attending the first *soirée* given by his Majesty, to which all foreigners who were known had the *entrée*.

His Majesty did me the honour to receive me most kindly, and condescended to converse with me, inquiring at the same time where I intended to spend the sporting season, and expressed a hope that I would consider the preserves at La

Ville d'Eu as at my disposal, should I feel disposed to return to Dieppe.

Such an unlooked-for mark of distinction was extremely flattering, and too tempting a proposal to be refused. I quitted the royal presence with the full intention of availing myself of the permission granted, and had scarcely reached the ante-chamber before I was familiarly tapped on the shoulder (not after the English fashion) by an elderly gentleman, who most kindly and politely inquired if I had ever extended my excursions as far as Brittany, for as he had heard from his Majesty that I was passionately fond of shooting, he ventured to recommend my visiting some extensive property he possessed in that part of France ; and intimated that, if I determined upon availing myself of his offer, he would indite an epistle to the *locum tenens* of his château to hold everything in readiness on my

arrival ; adding, that he would also give me letters of introduction to several proprietors in the neighbourhood of his domain, who were, as he termed them, *des chasseurs finis*.

His description of the country was alluring in the extreme ; and his account of the profusion of game of all kinds, to say nothing of the wild boars, decided me as to the course I should adopt.

I took the liberty of inviting my venerable acquaintance to dine with me the following day at the Hotel des Etrangers ; and Monsieur de R——, his Majesty's aide-de-camp, and Monsieur T—— G——, the celebrated artist (for who has not seen his marine views ?) also promised to meet him. They were true to their appointment at six, and three pleasanter or more intellectual guests I never had the gratification of entertaining. The culinary talent of the *chef* was put in requisition ;

and, in justice to this celebrated *artiste*, I must add, that he left our little *partie quarrée* nothing to desire.

To this appetizing dinner, I believe I was indebted for some of the best shooting I ever met with. I found my new acquaintance was a Monsieur de C——, a noble, whose family, although in juxtaposition with the Chouans, was favourable to the cause of the liberals; he was consequently in high favour with the existing government. Monsieur T—— G—— earnestly requested me to avail myself of Monsieur de C——'s offer, adding, by way of inducement, that he himself would accompany me as far as Lower Normandy, on my way to Brittany, as he was about to undertake a professional trip to Mont St. Michel.

If I had been undecided before, this additional temptation would have settled the matter; and it was with unaffected

pleasure that I accepted of this kind-hearted nobleman's offer. This plan, however, was in direct opposition to the one I had contemplated for our September operations, as Captain P—— and Mr. W—— had promised to meet me in the Champagne country for partridge and quail shooting.

I lost no time in apprizing them of the new arrangement, expressing a hope that they would join me, as I entertained but little doubt that Monsieur de C—— would willingly extend the permission to my *compatriotes*. This was unhesitatingly accorded as soon as hinted at,—to my great joy, for I by no means relished the idea of exploring the wilds of Brittany by myself.

My talented friend, Monsieur T—— G——, having some professional business to transact prior to our departure, I remained in Paris about a fortnight, during

which period I learnt many curious and interesting anecdotes connected with the recent revolution. The capital itself presented a scene of no little novelty: some of the streets were impassable, the pavement having been pulled up to form barricades ; in others, broken windows and perforated shutters, several of which were besmeared with gore, and gave sickening evidence that " Death " had been busy at work.

The slaughter had been immense in particular quarters ; and some spots, which were pointed out to me, were literally dyed with the ensanguined streams which had flowed from the veins of the self-devoted patriots. It is pretty generally known that Lafitte, the celebrated banker, was one of the most prominent leaders in furthering the views of the liberals. One of the heroes of July was so pleased with the capitalist, that, in his enthusiasm, he was heard to exclaim, in

the crowd who were defending their rights, "*Monsieur La Fitte il merite bien la croix d'honneur !*" A witty and facetious wag instantly responded, "ET CHARLES DIX L'ACCORDE !" This clever repartee was received with loud cheers by the mob, and is one of many similar anecdotes repeated to me.

I cannot resist recording the following, which is worthy of notice :—Shortly after the accession of Charles the Tenth to the throne of France, the strictest orders were issued, by authority of his Majesty, to suppress every visible sign of the Napoleon government.

It so happened that a veteran of the *vielle garde*, who had served in every campaign under the *petit caporal*, (as the Emperor was familiarly termed by his soldiers,) opened a small *estaminet* with the arrears and savings of his pay, and some trifling addition of patrimony. Here his

old companions in arms were wont to congregate after their noon-day repast, to con over the papers, discuss the politics of the day, play at piquet or dominos, drink their *petit verre* of Cognac, or a bottle of frothy beer.

The ex-grenadier was sorely puzzled for an appropriate sign indicative of his new calling; but remembering a celebrated oil painter, who had befriended him on more than one occasion, he applied to the benevolent artist, who kindly undertook to furnish him with a suitable *enseigne*.

In a few days was exhibited a well-executed representation of a tomb, with characteristic scenery, descriptive of the spot covering the remains of the old soldier's idol in the island of St. Helena: two veterans, in the uniform of Napoleon's old guards, were placed in the foreground, in a mournful attitude, leaning on their reversed firelocks, and gazing in silent sor-

row on the hallowed spot. Over this really good picture were these words, "*Au Tombeau du Brave.*"

Our hero had been permitted to remain in uninterrupted possession of his tenement for some months, and the alluring emblem of his former vocation allowed to dangle in triumph over his door, when, on an evil day, an *agent de police* presented himself, to the astonishment and dismay of the veteran, and hinted, in no measured terms, at the expediency of changing the character of the sign, and substituting another, less offensive to the existing government.

With no little regret and reluctance did the *vielle moustache* remove the prohibited painting. He flew to the artist, to whom he bitterly lamented the necessity of suppressing this emblem of his skill, which had so materially contributed to attract customers to his *café*.

The kind-hearted painter, with a significant “*Eh bien, nous verrons,*” begged of the disconsolate *militaire* not to despair of a remedy, and desired him to call on the following morning, by which time he thought an expedient might be hit upon, that would perhaps enable the *cabaretier* to re-produce his favourite sign, without any material alteration. The next day the still doubting soldier, true to his appointment, was at the door of the artist’s *atelier*, and on entering it, observed, to his astonishment, the *tombeau du brave* in the same objectionable state as (he conceived) he had left it on the preceding day.

The painter, perceiving strong indications of disappointment in the countenance of his old friend, desired him to look at the superscription. The former one had been expunged, and in its stead the following :—“*A la bière de Mars.*”

To those conversant with the French

language, the point of this *jeu de mots* will be obvious. The delighted veteran embraced his friend, the artist, *à la mode Française*, and returned exultingly to his *café*, where the sign, with the amended superscription, was immediately displayed, and may be seen, to this day, in a small street leading from the Boulevard du Temple. And should the reader, when next he visits the French capital, wish a confirmation of the above anecdote, he has only to call at the *Bière de Mars* for a glass of *liqueur*, when the aged proprietor will repeat, with feelings of gratitude to his benefactor, the fact I have here recorded.

As soon as Monsieur T. G—— had completed his arrangements, we left Paris for Dieppe, and I found my fellow-sportsmen, Captain P—— and Mr. W——, in high glee at the opportunity afforded them of visiting Lower Brittany. I found that,

during my absence, Mrs. P—— had taken alarm at the recent disturbances, and embarked with the children for England. Mr. W——, as may be inferred from his flirtation with the *Deputé's* spouse at Blangy, was a *garçon volage*; and as Captain P—— was doomed to bachelorship for some time, there was no impediment to his joining me in the trip.

We found, upon inquiry, that a small trading vessel was in the port of Dieppe, of, and belonging to, Isigny, laden with butter, for which commodity that little town of Lower Normandy is so justly celebrated.

The *Franco Normans* are rather addicted to driving hard bargains, and we had some difficulty in coming to terms with the owner and master of *L'Etoile*. After considerable delay, occasioned by his rapacity, he undertook to convey Captain P——, Mr. W——, Monsieur T. G——,

myself, three of our servants, nine couple of beagles, a brace and a half of setters, a brace of pointers, one poodle, and our baggage, for the sum of a hundred and thirty francs,—about five guineas.

Towards the latter end of August, our preparations having been completed, we sailed out of the harbour of Dieppe. Like provident Englishmen, we had taken on board of our little cutter an ample supply of edibles and drinkables, much to the satisfaction of our *schipper*, who came in for his share of our well-stored hampers.

We coasted along all night, and by five in the morning were off Havre, and kept stealing on during the day with a light breeze. The weather was too fine, or, rather, I should say, the wind did not keep pace with our impatience; for, had the breeze freshened, we should have reached the bay of Isigny before dark. As it was, we could only make Grandcamp,

a little fishing hamlet, about three miles to the eastward of the mouth of the bay. Here we anchored for the night, and consoled ourselves with cold brandy and water and cigars, anxiously awaiting the approach of daylight to reach our destination. \

In the morning we were visited by one of the most dense fogs I ever remember, and we were obliged to feel our way with the lead-line for two or three hours. At length the sun's increasing power dispelled the mist, when one of the most splendid views burst upon us I ever beheld. The Bay of Isigny, which is nearly five miles in depth, is one of the most picturesque and lovely spots it is possible to imagine. The high land on the southern side of the bay comprises part of the *Département de la Manche*, the whole range stretching towards Cherbourg. It is studded with private residences, and pre-

sents a romantic appearance. At my request, Monsieur T. G—— took a sketch of this enchanting scene ; and, a few weeks after he left us, Captain P—— received from Paris a beautiful and valuable landscape in oil, which now adorns the dining-room of the old family mansion in Leicestershire.

The town of Isigny lies at the extremity of this bight of land forming the bay. There are several marshes on the north-east side, which are full of snipe and every description of wild-fowl. We landed about twelve o'clock in the day, and were the objects of great curiosity and comment to the inhabitants, as we were the first Englishmen who had ever intruded on the monotony of this sequestered spot.

We found an excellent hotel, having for its title the *Grape de Raisin*, and most comfortably were we housed. A capacious

building was allotted to our quadrupeds, the numbers and variety of which excited much wonderment in the minds of our host, his wife, and offspring.

As soon as we had refreshed ourselves by bathing and dressing, we rambled about the town and environs, and on our return found an excellent dinner awaiting us: the poultry was marvellously good, and the butter (the staple commodity of trade to all parts of France) delicious. The pasture is particularly rich and abundant here, the cows of a remarkably fine breed, and the quantity of butter exported from this little town is prodigious. We were waited upon in the evening by the authorities of the place,—these were, *Monsieur le maire*, *l'adjoint*, an *avocat*, and the *percepteur*. This latter person, whose name was Le Bourg, was loud in his praises of some marshes about three miles from Isigny, which skirted a

village named Vouilly, where he possessed a country seat.

We were induced to accompany him, on the following day, to his *campagne*, as he termed it, in order that we might reconnoitre the swamp. Our newly-made acquaintance, Monsieur le Bourg, pressed us to hire his indifferently-furnished cottage for a month or six weeks, assuring us that we should have free permission to shoot over all the farmers' lands in the neighbourhood, which, to quote his own hyperbolical expression, were "*remplis de perdreaux*."

As Monsieur T. G—— was proceeding on a professional tour to Mount St. Michel, and we were in no particular hurry, we were over-persuaded to make trial of this part of the country, prior to our projected journey into Lower Brittany.

Bitterly did we repent of our easy compliance with the selfish and interested

views of our rapacious landlord. His cold and comfortless cottage was not half furnished ; and, in addition to the mortification of having been grossly deceived, and made the dupes of this scheming tax-gatherer, we learnt that we had paid more for the two months' hire of his barn than he would have presumed to ask a native for as many years.

We only found three coveys of partridges during our stay ; the snipes, however, were plentiful, and we committed great havoc amongst them. The inhabitants of this said hamlet of Vouilly were the most uncouth savages I ever met with anywhere ; and had it not been for the hospitality and kindness of Madame La Comtesse de Cussy, whose beautiful chateau adjoined the village, our sojourn would have been insupportable.

This truly amiable and fascinating lady made her chateau our home, and paid us

**the** most marked and distinguished attention during our stay.

The *curé* of Vouilly was a most intellectual personage, and, like a true son of the church, had no objection to a glass of generous wine. The old priest had been in England during the former revolution, having fled from his own country, with other *émigrés*, at that alarming period. He told us he had supported himself in London by making ornamental rugs and carpets for an establishment in Cockspur-street. He invariably expressed himself as exceedingly grateful for the protection afforded by our government to himself and his brothers in misfortune; and we had practical proof, in the shape of unremitting attention and hospitality, that he was not unmindful of the debt of kindness he owed our country.

I have already hinted at the bacchanalian propensities of this venerable ecclesiastic, and his *cave* gave ample proof of

his *goût* in this respect ; for many a more wealthy votary of the jolly god might have envied him a certain choice batch of *Romanée*, (the most delicious of Burgundies,) the fragrant *bouquet* of which I shall never forget.

Notwithstanding the hospitality of our noble lady of the chateau and the jolly *cure du village*, we determined upon setting out for Brittany, and within three weeks of our arrival at Isigny we started for the land of promise. We took leave of our kind friends at Vouilly with unfeigned regret, and set off *en poste* for Guingamp, the scene of our projected exploits. We were fortunate in our weather, and taking advantage of it, pushed on for Coutances, which town, by dint of coaxing and a little *argentine* persuasion, we reached before night-fall. Our postilion grumbled sadly, but the *douceur* smoothed all difficulties.

We passed through Granville on the

following day, where we partook of a late breakfast, being determined to reach Avanches the same evening, if possible ; for we had been given to understand that the intermediate villages would not afford us anything in the shape of comfortable accommodation. After traversing the most atrocious roads that ever jeopardized spring or axletree, we got into Avranche soon after midnight. Our disasters did not end here, for on getting between the sheets after supper, we found the beds tenanted by famished live stock, which, following our example in the *salle à manger*, were regaling themselves on our wearied limbs with a most carnivorous zeal. The bloodthirsty attack was carried on with such vigour that repose was quite out of the question, so we decided upon leaving the bugs to feed upon one another.

To the surprise of our hostess and ser-

vants, we rang for lights and tubs of water, and having washed our mangled bodies, we descended to the *salle à manger*, where we consoled ourselves with some cold-without and a cigar, waiting for daylight with Christian-like patience, when we determined to start for Pontorson, where we proposed to break our fast.

Our landlady of the Hotel des Punaïses did not appear to relish this arrangement ; but she had to contend against three sturdy, growling, sleepy *voyageurs*, and gave up the point. We found the accommodation at Pontorson so good that we were inclined to stop there for a day or two ; but as we were in hopes of catching our fellow-traveller, Monsieur T. G——, at Dinan, we resolved upon proceeding, and soon after ten at night we were comfortably domiciled under the roof of the Hotel du Commerce.

Dinan is a beautiful little watering-

place, and much frequented by invalids, its principal attraction being a mineral spring, which is said to contain many valuable properties for persons afflicted with pulmonary and scorbutic complaints. We found to our regret that Monsieur T. G—— had left Dinan two days before our arrival. This disappointment did not prevent our remaining until the following morning, or rather the second morning ; and we amused ourselves during the interval in exploring this pretty little town and its charming environs. We had no reason to repent having devoted one day to this purpose, for a more enchanting view never gratified the gaze of wandering traveller.

The scene, however, has been described so ably, and by so masterly a hand in Mr. Trollope's talented and agreeable work on Brittany, that any attempt of mine would not only be superfluous, but presump-

tuous. In our ramble we met a few of our fellow-countrymen and fair countrywomen, and to judge from their healthy and contented appearance, I should say they were as well pleased with this delightful spot as any voluntary exiles could wish to be. We quitted Dinan with some reluctance, and posted on to Lamballe, a town situated on the coast, where we arrived in time for a late dinner. Here we found excellent beds, guiltless of bugs, and very tolerable fare.

After partaking of a capital breakfast the next morning, we set off for Guimgamp, our destination, where we arrived about five o'clock. We were agreeably surprised at finding the town very superior in every respect to what we had preconceived it to be, and the hotel, to which we had been directed, on a scale of grandeur, united with comfort, beyond our most sanguine expectations. The

news of our arrival soon spread through the town, and we were waited upon in less than two hours by some gentlemen to whom we had brought letters of introduction.

The reception and greeting we experienced were most gratifying, and before the evening was over we were promised the *droit de chasse* for miles around Guim-gamp. Monsieur M——, the banker, to whom we had brought letters of credit from Paris, was particularly civil and attentive, and endeavoured to cater for our comfort in every possible way. We found he had a snug little box about a quarter of a mile from the town, which, from the description he gave us of it, appeared more calculated for our purpose than remaining at an inn with a large retinue of dogs and servants.

Our new acquaintance left us with a promise of waiting upon us the following

morning. Monsieur M——, the banker, was the first who presented himself at our *levée*, and, at our request, accompanied us to his country-house. To our very great joy, as well as surprise, we found one of the most comfortable cottages we had ever seen in France. Moreover, it was particularly well furnished. The offices and outhouses were excellent, and the fruit and vegetable gardens well stocked. In short, we discovered every desideratum for three wandering sportsmen with a large establishment of dogs. We were so pleased with this little shooting-box that a bargain was soon concluded, and we agreed to take possession as soon as our servants and dogs should arrive by the *diligence* from Isigny.

We returned to our hotel, where our friend the banker dined with us at the *table d'hôte*, and a better appointed one I never met with in any part of France.

About twenty sat down to the table, which was loaded with every delicacy in season, —fish in an infinite variety; flesh and fowl, each excellent of its kind; and game in profusion,—the price, one franc per head.

Our landlord was extremely desirous of adding our names to his list of *pensionnaires*, offering to feed us three times a day, with cider à *discretion*, for thirty-six francs per month each. He was evidently disappointed and annoyed at the banker's interference, which he conceived would deprive him of three *bonnes pratiques*; but we consoled him by promising him to come *en ville* frequently to taste his Burgundy, of which he had given us some savoury samples.

The banker's little shooting-box contained a *salon*, *salle à manger*, three best bed rooms, and three sleeping apartments for the servants. Everything was found

with the exception of plate and linen, of which we had plenty. A more favoured spot never delighted the lover of sporting. A river ran at the foot of the garden abounding with delicious trout, and I could, in my dressing-gown and slippers, always command my dish of fish for breakfast or dinner.

For this truly comfortable habitation, well furnished, we paid, gentle reader, the inconceivably small sum of three hundred francs a year. This amount between my companions and myself was not very ruinous ; and, by way of episode, I would advise all gentlemen of pleasing manners and small fortunes, and who may be fond of shooting and fishing, to migrate to Lower Brittany. Game of every description is in profusion, and the living is incredibly cheap. I really and truly am of opinion that Mr. Long Wellesley himself, with all his ingenuity and *grand*

*talent pour la dépense* could not get through a hundred a-year ;—a moderate man *may* live most comfortable upon half this sum. With sixty pounds a year he would be accounted rich, an income of fifteen hundred francs being considered a handsome independence ; and any individual with a rental of two thousand francs is revered as a *millionnaire*.

To officers on half-pay the advantages are incalculable. Lower Brittany is the land of *Cocagne* for those of moderate incomes. But I shall revert to this subject before I conclude.

It came to pass that a favourite and valuable setter of mine, of the softer sex, and which was a great pet with us all, had accompanied my companions and myself in our *calèche*, and for lack of better amusement I resolved upon exploring the environs to reconnoitre the coveys. Mr. W—— and myself accord-

ingly sallied forth one fine morning, accompanied by an old *garde de chasse*, who undertook to shew us plenty of sport.

On quitting the town, we took some high ground to the left, and in less than a quarter of an hour my setter began to draw, and as we entered a field she was on her point ; we walked up to her and sprung a covey, five birds of which fell before our barrels ; in the same field we found two more coveys, which we thinned very satisfactorily. On gaining some still higher ground, the dog drew and stood ; she was walked up to, but to my astonishment we found no birds ; she was encouraged, and with great difficulty coaxed off her point ; she still kept drawing on, but with the same ill success.

I must confess I was for the moment sorely puzzled, but knowing the excellence of the animal, I let her alone ; she kept drawing on for nearly a hundred

yards, still no birds. At last, of her own accord, and with a degree of instinct amounting almost to the faculty of reasoning, she broke from her point, and, dashing off to the right, made a *détour*, and was presently straight before me, some three hundred yards off, setting the game, whatever it might be, as much as to say, "I'll be d——d if you escape me this time." We walked steadily on, and when within about thirty yards of her, up got a covey of red-legged partridges, and we had the good fortune to kill a brace each.

It is one of the characteristics of these birds to run for an amazing distance before they take wing ; but the sagacity of my faithful dog baffled all their efforts to escape. On this occasion, she pinched the first bird she brought to me, to vent, I presume, her wrath at the extra trouble they had occasioned her. This was so

unusual an occurrence with her, that I pardoned the transgression on account of her surpassing ingenuity.

We fell in with several coveys of these birds during the day, and my dog ever after gave the birds the double, and kept them between the gun and herself. We had excellent sport all the afternoon, and when we left off, Mr. W—— had bagged thirteen brace of birds, and a brace of hares; and I had eleven brace and a half of birds, and a leash of hares. Our old *garde de chasse* blazed away right and left, and I believe *did* kill a couple of brace, although, according to his own account, he hit everything he fired at, *but his powder was bad*. We promised to send to England for some powder that shot *straight*; for which offer he expressed himself in the most grateful terms.

We returned to Guingamp to dinner, and were highly complimented on our

skill, such a number of birds never having been knocked over by two guns in the same space of time—at least, in that part of the world. The old *garde de chasse* could hardly contain his rapture regarding my dog, pronouncing her to be endowed with qualifications far beyond any of the canine race he had ever heard of, and even hinted at some supernatural agency, as I overheard his Satanic majesty's name mentioned as having been connected with her operations in the field.

We tried the marshes on the following day, and found a very fair sprinkling of snipe; but as the weather was unusually dry, and the season having hardly commenced, we could scarcely have expected so many as there were. The nature of the swamp, however, was such as to convince us that we should never want a day's sport when the rains set in; in fact, we were told by every one that the marshes lite-

rally swarmed with snipes in the winter, and their predictions were verified, as I may perhaps mention hereafter.

We amused ourselves marvellously well during the period which preceded the arrival of our dogs. The long wished for day came at last, our servants and quadrupeds making their appearance all safe and well. The court-yard of the inn was literally thronged with the town's-people, anxious to look at the beagles, which to them were objects of great curiosity. As soon as the inspection was over, we repaired to our suburban villa, where masters, domestics, and dogs were soon comfortably housed. We had the satisfaction to find that none of the animals had suffered from the journey, and that they were in excellent condition.

We wrote immediately to the *major domo* of our Parisian noble's château to apprise him of our intention to besiege it

in a few days. We allowed our little pack a week's rest to recruit themselves, and on the eighth or ninth day after their arrival we started, armed *cap-à-pied*, for the splendid domain of Monsieur de C——.

This magnificent property is distant from Guimgamp about twenty miles, and the woods surrounding it are full of wild boar and chevreuil. We were received in due form, and with some parade, by the vassals of the noble proprietor; the orders transmitted from Paris had evidently been on the most liberal scale, for the preparations made for our reception, and the style in which we were welcomed within the gates of the chateau, would have done honour to crowned heads; the whole ceremony was worthy of the feudal times. We were ushered into the *salle-à-manger* with a vast deal of pomp, which we could very well have dispensed with;

but as the dependents were so desirous of making up for the absence of Monseigneur, we took all their officious zeal in good part.

While these formalities were enacting, some of the *piqueurs* and rustics had organized a concert of horn music, and a *chasse* was struck up in honour of our arrival. This inspiring composition was by no means acceptable to our little beagles, for, ye gods! such a howl issued forth in response to the *tantaram* that our gravity for the moment was completely overcome.

Whether the obsequious serving-men were displeased at this breach of decorum on our part, or at the interruption to their harmony, I will not pretend to say; but they were evidently disconcerted. Order, however, was soon restored, and after thanking the horn-blowers for their courtesy, and rewarding their discordant

blasts with a few francs, we stood as high as ever in the good graces of all.

After the duties of the *toilette* had been performed, we began to think of discussing some of our noble host's fare. We were told that dinner would be served up at five o'clock, and that some of the neighbours were to preside at the festive board to welcome us to their part of the country.

.In about an hour, four gentlemen were presented to us in the salon ; they had ridden over to do the honours for the absent lord of the manor. A magnificent repast awaited us in the *salle-à-manger*, comprising every delicacy France can produce. To describe all the good things which were lavished upon us would be a task I could never do justice to, as it is far beyond the powers of my feeble pen, although I shall ever entertain a grateful remembrance of the incompar-

able cheer which gladdened our keen appetites.

Our hospitable, though unfortunately absent host had sent a first-rate *chef* from Paris to preside over the *cuisine*, and under his fostering care were forwarded from Chevet's celebrated emporium in the Palais Royal many appetizing addenda to the well-stored larder of his chateau ; *inter alia*, a boar's head stuffed with truffles, and divers turkeys similarly *farciéd*. And the wines which were displayed before us!—such nectarian beverage never before was quaffed, I do believe! In short, our kind and noble friend had done everything in his power to gratify us, and make us comfortable.

The head *piqueur* waited upon us before the dessert was concluded, requesting to know if it were our pleasure to attack the boars on the morrow, to which proposition he received a ready affirmative ;

and, after swallowing a goblet of Burgundy, he retired to make arrangements for a grande chasse, to be holden on the following morning. After punishing our host's cellar pretty considerably, we repaired to the salon, and played at Boston with our country friends. This, by-the-way, is an exceedingly interesting game, and much played in the provinces of France: it is a mixture of whist and rerversis, and requires much skill and finesse.

We betook ourselves betimes to our virtuous beds, where I enjoyed an uninterrupted slumber until a blast from a horn, applied to the lock of my room door, gave intimation of our projected sport. We started soon after six o'clock in grand procession for the scene of action. I was provided with one of John Manton's best doubles, and I need scarcely add I was well armed; indeed for ball-

shooting, I have ever found his guns to possess a decided superiority over every other maker. The *piqueurs* marched in front with a banditti (or little band) of horn-players ; next followed Capt. P——, Mr. W——, and myself, with our new acquaintances of the preceding evening. The rear was brought up by a train of followers, not forgetting our own servants and the beagles. The *gardes de chasse* from the neighbourhood had some large and powerful dogs, whose services were to be called into requisition to pull down the boar when wounded.

On our way to the Grand Bois we drew a covert, but found nothing. On arriving at the corner of the wood where we were to commence operations, we were halted, and glasses of Cognac, or *gouttes*, as they were termed, were handed round in quick succession to all the party. The head *piqueur* then took a second bumper to his

own share—in honour, I presume, of his rank; as soon as this inspiring draught had been swallowed, the word *en avant* was given, and we proceeded for some distance down a wide alley of the copse.

On arriving at a particular spot, where the road was intersected by numerous paths, we were all allotted our different stations, sufficiently apart, of course, to guard against mischief. One of the attendants, Jacquot by name, requested permission to remain with me. This poor fellow, from the moment of my arrival, appeared to have taken a fancy to me, and was the most prominent of all the *staff* at the chateau in sedulous attention to please, by many little acts of courtesy. There is a sympathetic freemasonry amongst mortals, undefinable as far as first impressions go, and likings and dislikings are begotten at a glance: it was mutual

in this instance at least, for I liked the fellow from the first moment I saw him.

It will ever be a source of regret that this poor youth's sudden partiality for me was, in a great measure, the cause of an untimely accident which befel him in the latter part of the day. But I must not anticipate.

The *grand piqueur*, accompanied by our servants and the beagles, skirted the wood down wind, and turned them in half a mile below us. The little rogues had not entered the covert ten minutes before they gave us some cheering music, and I had the pleasure of turning over a fine *chevreuil*, which was bounding up the path before me; I hit him in the chest, and he never moved. I shortly afterwards heard the well-known John-Bullish "ye-hip" from my friend Mr. W——, who had quitted his post to come and see what I had done.

Just as I had reloaded, and he was standing by my side, another *chevreuil* crossed the riding : I was in the very act of firing, when I was most unceremoniously tossed, with my nether extremity uppermost, by a huge boar, which the pertinacious little beagles were in quest of. Luckily the brute did me no injury. Mr. W—— sent a bullet after him, and he went limping off with the lead in his *ultimatum*. Mr. W—— then left me, to return to his stand, in the hope of meeting with the wounded boar ; nor was he disappointed, for he killed him shortly afterwards.

I had been waiting patiently for upwards of an hour, when a rustling at some little distance aroused my attention. I perceived a juvenile boar about thirty yards from me, and saluted the gentleman with the contents of my left barrel, and turned him over. My *aide-de-camp*,

Jacquot, despatched him with a kind of hatchet, and dragged the animal to the spot where I was stationed.

In the course of an hour afterwards I killed another boar, about three-parts grown ; and from the number of shots I heard, I conjectured that my companions in arms had met with equally good sport.

I have now the painful task of recording a tragical adventure, which will never be effaced from my memory. A huge boar, of savage aspect, came rooting and snorting up the path, at the head of which I was standing. I took a deliberate aim at the brute and hit him in the chest ; he staggered, and turned down a small opening in the wood on his left. Poor Jacquot, in his anxiety to assist in the capture, followed the boar, and found him at bay a short distance from the spot where he had been wounded, and where we had lost sight of him.

I had scarcely reloaded ere I heard a discordant and horrible scream from my faithful follower. I rushed to the spot, and found poor Jacquot on the ground, struggling with his bristled antagonist! I was horror-stricken at the moment, but, recovering my presence of mind, shot the savage beast instantly, having discharged both barrels within ten yards of him. I found this poor fellow with his thigh dreadfully lacerated, and his intestines protruding from the lower region of the abdomen.

It appeared that poor Jacquot had been fool-hardy, or had conceived the animal to be more seriously wounded than it turned out he had been. He had the temerity to approach the brute, with the view of despatching him with his hatchet, when the boar sprung up, and, rushing between his legs, upset and gored him in the horrible manner I have described.

I hallooed at the top of my voice for my companions, and I was soon afterwards joined by Mr. W—— and Captain P——. The latter ran immediately for further assistance, which happily was not a long way off. We conveyed the unfortunate sufferer back to the chateau on a litter, but before medical aid could arrive he expired.

This was indeed a melancholy termination to our day's sport, and of course put an end to all further amusement. We returned to Guingamp on the following day, promising, however, to renew our visit at a future period ; or, at least, as soon as the impression of the late awful catastrophe should in some degree have worn off.

I must, in justice to my fellow-countrymen, as well as myself, add, that we were not unmindful that this ill-fated youth had lost his life while administer-

ing to our gratification ; for we left behind us three thousand francs for the use of his family.

The melancholy accident which I have described cast a gloom over us for a considerable period, and it was long ere we could reflect, without feelings of the deepest sorrow and regret, upon the untimely fate of our fellow-huntsman, who had fallen in our cause.

Our kind host of the chateau was good enough to correspond with us after our return to Guimgamp, and on more than one occasion condoled with us on the painful interruption to our sport on our first visit to his hospitable mansion. Indeed, his grief for the loss of this faithful follower was as sincere as heartfelt ; for some members of the poor fellow's family had served in a menial capacity from as distant a period almost as the date of the family tree.

Monsieur de C—— having intimated to us that it was his intention to visit his estates in Brittany towards the end of the year, we deferred our second visit to the chateau until his arrival, and we employed our time during the interval in partridge and snipe-shooting. We had plenty of sport, and when the rains set in, in October, the marshes were full of snipe. About the end of November, we received a letter from our distinguished Parisian friend, apprizing us that he had engaged a large party of nobles to accompany him from the capital to the seat of his ancestors, there to partake of the Christmas festivities, and the pleasures of *la chasse* in his well-stocked woods and preserves. This communication was received by us with unfeigned delight, and we looked forward with no little pleasure to the period when our host of the castle should arrive.

Towards the latter end of the first week

in December, two piqueurs in Kendal Green agitated the tintinnabulum of our retired little box. A peal of this kind was so unusual that the whole of our quadrupeds struck up an angry chorus at this unlooked-for interruption to the quiet of our sequestered establishment. A most polite, friendly, and pressing invitation, in which my companions were included, was handed to me, which, I need scarcely say, was responded to in the affirmative.

The bearers of the welcome missive were not permitted to depart without doing honour to our larder and cellar, the excellence of which they were pleased to extol; and they certainly gave proof, by the quantity of liquids and solids they consumed, that they approved of the samples set before them.

## CHAPTER V.

Return to Monsieur de C——'s chateau—Dinner party and ball—Monsieur le Marquis—Cock shooting—Grande chasse aux sangliers—Monsieur le Marquis enlisted as a chasseur—He makes an unfortunate mistake, and kills a dog instead of a boar.

On the day following the arrival of the welcome messengers, we were busily employed in making preparations for our departure. Numberless were the bullets cast for the occasion. The "Manton," the "Purdey," and the "Moore," received an extra polishing, and I can

assure these celebrated makers that their guns looked as well, and were in as good order, as when we first purchased them.

The only available conveyance was a lumbering vehicle, the undoubted property of our worthy Boniface, the host of the Hotel de Bretagne, in Guingamp, and as the distance we had to travel was not greater than three post-horses (abreast) could accomplish in six hours, we had ordered the cumbersome machine to be in readiness by ten o'clock the next day.

Great, therefore, was our satisfaction, the following morning about nine o'clock, on beholding a well-appointed Parisian equipage at our door, with a couple of outriders, to escort us to the chateau. The comfort of an easy carriage was not to be refused; so, availing ourselves of Monsieur de C——'s attentive forethought and politeness, we set off by ten o'clock for his hospitable mansion. Our little

pack of beagles had preceded us by some hours, a trusty domestic having started with them at daylight.

After divers bumpings and joltings, caused by certain inequalities of such roads as Mr. Macadam never dreamt of, we arrived at our journey's end, where we were received in the most flattering and cordial manner it is possible to imagine.

We were not only welcomed by the noble owner of this princely domain, but also by the tenantry and domestics, who testified by unequivocal demonstrations, the pleasure they felt at our coming amongst them again ; nor ought I to omit mentioning that the relatives of the unfortunate youth who had lost his life on our last visit waylaid us on our entrance to the avenue leading to the gates of the chateau, and were loud in their expressions of gratitude for the trifling sum we had placed in their hands to compensate, in some

slight degree, for the irreparable loss they had sustained ; and it was not a little gratifying to our feelings (although it brought back fresh to our recollection the tragical adventure I have recorded) to find that the friends of our departed follower were grateful for the compassionate feeling we had exhibited in alleviating their distress as far as laid in our power.

On alighting in the court-yard fronting the mansion, we had to pass through a double file of domestics and followers ; and in the hall we were literally *embraced* by our warm-hearted host, who expressed most unequivocally the satisfaction he enjoyed at our arrival.

We ascended with our noble friend to the *grand salon de cérémonie*, where we found a large party assembled, composed partly of his Parisian friends and a goodly muster of the noblesse of the neighbourhood. Some one or two of the guests I

had seen and been introduced to in Paris, and had also been placed in juxtaposition with them at the *soirées* of the "Citizen King." We were *les biens venus* to all, and of a verity a more flattering reception three strangers never met with. Never shall I forget the cordiality and good feeling with which we were welcomed; and we were as much at home in five minutes as if we had been related by the closest ties of consanguinity to the princely proprietor of this venerable structure.

About half-past five, the gratifying announcement of *Monsieur est servi* greeted my longing ears, for our cold drive had whetted my appetite to an enviable pitch of keenness. I descended to the *salle à manger*, where such a repast awaited us as might have raised the ghost of Quin himself. Ude is a botcher compared with the *chef* of our Amphytrion; a more sumptuous or exquisitely dressed banquet never

gratified the lover of good eating or the most fastidious palate ; the wines were of the rarest and finest quality, and circulated with an unsparing liberality.

In the course of conversation at dinner, the subject of sporting was frequently alluded to, and we were pointed out as positive Crichtons with our double-barrels. Be this as it may, our fame had travelled far and wide as crack shots, and I was really apprehensive that our execution would fall short of the favourable opinion that had been formed of our skill.

This was put to the proof sooner than we had anticipated, for our host informed us that a day or two would intervene ere he intended us to attack the boars, but that he had arranged we should accompany a few of his friends to some alders on the following day, where, he foretold, we should find an abundance of

woodcocks. The prediction was amply verified, as will be seen.

From what I could glean, I was led to believe that a *battue* was to be performed on the morrow. Now, as I did not much admire the idea of beating up cocks, I blush to own that I bribed a *garde de chasse* over night, and sneaked out in the grey of the morning, with a steady old dog appertaining to the keeper, and I had killed eleven couple and a half before the party from the chateau joined me.

The slaughter committed on this day was really monstrous. I speak within bounds when I say that we saw from three to four hundred cocks, from first to last. After the arrival of my companions, we separated, and the keeper who had accompanied me selected some choice spots, and I had capital sport.

On returning homewards I fell in with

Capt. P—— and Mr. W——, who had expended a vast deal of ammunition, and been very successful. Before reaching the garden grounds at the rear of the chateau, we had to pass through a small plantation of holly ; the number of cocks congregated here was incredible, and had we not been accompanied by so many of our Gallic friends, we should have knocked over more than we did ; but our continental neighbours are not as yet versed in the etiquette which real sportsmen exercise towards each other in the field, consequently there was a lamentable lack of courtesy, and such scrambling, cross-firing, and jostling, I never before witnessed ; the anxiety to obtain a shot was paramount to every feeling of good-breeding, for which (in the drawing-room, at least) a Frenchman is proverbial ; but here, alas ! the falling off was great indeed !

Captain P——, Mr. W——, and my-

self were lucky enough, in spite of the puerile anxiety betrayed by our over-eager companions to make some extraordinary shots. Upon the whole, we returned home well pleased with our day's amusement, although we could not but condemn the unsportsman-like conduct of some of our noble host's guests. To the honour of my country, and the manifest superiority of our guns, the numbers killed stood as under:—

Guests.	Guns, and Makers' Names.	Couples of Cocks killed.
Captain P—— . . . .	Joe Manton . . .	14
Mr. W—— . . . .	Purdey . . . .	13½
Myself . . . . .	John Manton . .	21½
Monsieur de B—— .	Le Page . . . .	6
Monsieur de V—— .	Unknown . . . .	3½
Monsieur de L—— .	Le Page . . . .	5
Monsieur M—— . .	Chevalier . . . .	5½
Head keeper . . . .	Le Page . . . .	7
Another <i>garde de chasse</i>	Unknown . . . .	4

Making a total of eighty couples of cocks shot on this memorable day.

This havoc will doubtless be deemed extraordinary ; it is, nevertheless, strictly true ; and when I state that the alders and brushwood in the low lands were literally swarming with these birds, and that they flew like owls, the reader will cease to wonder.

Another circumstance in our favour was, the fact of their haunts not having been disturbed (save by the keeper occasionally) for years. We were highly complimented upon our skill on returning to the chateau, and I was not a little proud of the immeasurable superiority we had maintained. I do not think Capt. P——, Mr. W——, or myself missed five shots in the early part of the day, and *not one* when we came to the holly bushes, where we had been crossed and jostled in so unusual a manner.

As soon as the very requisite ablutions had been performed, and our *toilettes* com-

pleted, we repaired to the salon, where we found our already large party considerably increased by the arrival of several ladies, both young and *d'un certain age*, who had been invited to partake of the festivities of the season; and I am vain enough to suspect that our arrival had contributed in some degree to the strong muster of beauty which awaited us in the drawing-room.

Our jolly host explained to us, with an exulting chuckle, that he had sent forth invitations far and wide on the preceding day, imploring all the spinsters in the neighbourhood to come and *assister au bal* which he was about to give in honour of his English visitors; and some very blooming specimens of Bretagne beauty had he congregated.

At the hour of five, the peals of the dinner bell announced that the banquet was served, when each cavalier descended

to the *salle à manger* with the object of his choice. I had pitched upon a laughing, gazelle-eyed damsel for my companion at the dinner-table ; nor was I disappointed in the selection I had made, for a more unaffected, fascinating little angel I never wish to sit next to.

My fair friend was very inquisitive as to the ladies of England,—their method of passing their time, their education, &c. ; and, for a provincial, was tolerably expert in criticising the *gaucheries* of my fair countrywomen, and she displayed a good-natured tact in quizzing some of the peculiarities from which but a chosen few of the *belles Anglaises* are free. I soon found that my little friend had a *passion merveilleuse pour la danse*, and loved waltzing *à la folie*, and I was too good a tactician to let slip the opportunity of engaging her as my partner for the greater part of the evening, having a certain presentiment

that her *mignon* of a foot would not belie her undisguised partiality for this elegant amusement.

A little way down the table, on my right hand, I perceived a youthful party of both sexes besieging, in a most unmerciful manner, a little bald-headed and powdered marquis, who was a perfect caricature of one of the *ancien régime*. He was a *bon vivant*, a bigoted adherer to the maxims of his forefathers, and a *royaliste enragé*; consequently he held in utter detestation the usurpation (as he termed it) of the Citizen King.

He had fastened upon my friend Capt, P——, whom the marquis facetiously termed *son ami Jean Bull*, and swore roundly he would shew him that a *véritable Français* could drink any Englishman under the table. In this hazardous enterprise he was seconded by some arch and mischievous wags by whom he was sur-

rounded. He quaffed his champagne and Burgundy glass for glass with my Leicestershire friend, as if the contents had been so much water.

Now it so happened, and unfortunately for Monsieur le Marquis, that Captain P—— had been all his life a four-bottle man, was celebrated for having a hard head when in the —— dragoons, and, moreover, was a member of the B—— Hunt. With such qualifications, I need scarcely add, that he was the last man in the world the old gentleman should have pitched upon for this trial of bacchanalian skill. The result is not difficult to be guessed—the old boy was completely floored; and when we accompanied the ladies to the *salon*, Monsieur le Marquis cut a very sorry figure.

After the coffee and its consecutive *chasse* had been handed round, the folding doors of an adjoining *salon* were thrown open,

where a most efficient band was provided. All was in a moment gaiety and animation, and a pleasanter ball I never enjoyed.

There was a total absence of that listless formality which congeals the animal spirits of the good people in this country ; and as in this instance there had been less of ostentation than good feeling in giving but short notice of the meeting, so was there less of the form and etiquette usually observed at a *grand bal paré*.

After a good deal of coaxing and pressing on the part of some mischievous, laughter-loving girls, Monsieur le Marquis was prevailed upon to dance, and he acquitted himself much better than could have been expected, albeit exhibiting all the capers, *entrechats*, and wriggings of the old school.

The marquis's legs having once been set in motion there was no stopping him ; and having achieved a valtz, he was be-

sieging all the girls in the room for permission to encircle their taper waists with his fleshless arms. At last, to our surprise, he pounced upon a stout old dowager, fat, fair, and fifty-five, and partly by entreaty, and partly, I must say, by force, he led out this mountain of flesh, and away they went at a railroad pace. But oh!—direful mishap—such a scene ensued! Whether it was in consequence of the repeated whirlings or the obesity of the lady I am not prepared to say; but suddenly she was observed to falter in her steps, and the little marquis was also all abroad, so that the reeling portended some disaster.

A form had been placed across the room to divide the dancers from the dowagers, who were enjoying as spectators the festive scene before them. Against this form the portly dame stumbled, and lost her equilibrium; the mar-

quis's nerveless arm was unequal to the task of supporting the extraordinary weight of his partner, who, not being able to recover her balance, went over head foremost,—such a catastrophe! But I must draw a veil over this part of my story ; the misadventure may be imagined, although it cannot be described.

The marquis followed the lady as a matter of course ; but his anatomy was nearly lost in the ample folds of his partner's dress. The prostrate dowager screamed, Monsieur le Marquis sneezed, and the spectators laughed. Prompt assistance was afforded to the unfortunate couple ; madame's habiliments were properly adjusted ; she shook herself a little, and appeared somewhat confused, but soon recovered her self-possession. Not so the little marquis, who was sorely disconcerted, and it was long ere he could reconcile himself to the



*Pay's Hagre Lath to the floor*

*R. J. Hamerton.*

THE MARQUIS'S DISASTER, WHILE WALTZING WITH THE FAT DOWAGER.



titterings of the younger part of the assembly.

At length a flourish from the chef d'orchestre recalled the wandering couples, and we soon forgot, in the enjoyment of a quadrille, the little mishap that had caused the temporary interruption to our amusement. Poor Monsieur le Marquis was sorely roasted, and afforded infinite amusement to the mischievous portion of the young people. About one o'clock supper was announced, and the evening passed off with the utmost hilarity.

On the following day we amused ourselves by visiting the fish-ponds, and driving about the grounds. Our host, Monsieur de C——, apprised us that the *chasse aux sangliers* was to take place on the following day, and desired us to make the necessary arrangements. We accordingly did so, and great were the preparations for giving the boars a warm reception.

Several of the ladies left us in the

afternoon, and some few of the gentlemen, who had merely been invited to make themselves useful in the ball-room.

From the first moment I beheld Monsieur le Marquis I had determined upon enlisting him in our band of chasseurs. What put this idea into my head I cannot tell; but the impulse was irresistible. Accordingly, upon the little noble making known his intention of taking his departure, I put my veto upon such a step, and called all the rhetoric I was master of to my aid to induce him to alter his determination.

I appealed to our host, who also endeavoured to impress upon his noble guest the absolute necessity of his lending his valuable aid towards the destruction of the wild boars. His vanity was piqued, and upon being entreated by all of us to comply with our earnest request, he yielded a reluctant compliance, and, shrugging up his shoulders, exclaimed,

“Eh bien, mes enfans, je ferai comme vous voudrez ; j’irai, ma foi, et nom de Dieu, j’en tuerai plusieurs de ces bêtes féroces.”

I should have observed, that this outpouring of valour was delivered *after* dinner ; but, of course, after such a tirade, shrinking was out of the question ; and if the reader could have witnessed the Dutch determination of the antiquated hero after paying his devoirs to divers bottles of Burgundy, he would have set him down in his own mind as the very essence and spirit of St. Hubert himself.

Great were the feats he was to perform on the morrow ; and nothing would satisfy him but being armed with one of our London doubles.

It so happened that a spare gun of mine, made by Westley Richards, had been put up in the carriage, and, to the inexpressible delight of this enterprising

son of St. Louis, I promised to lend it to him.

After our game of "Boston" we separated for the night, about ten o'clock, to be ready by the morrow's dawn. Our party on this occasion was much increased, and in the same ratio the chances of a stray ounce of lead or two finding its way into my body instead of a boar's ; I accordingly, in the morning, adopted precautionary measures.

We were summoned to the breakfast hall rather before day-break, where, after partaking of some excellent *consommée*, and divers drams of old Cognac, we departed. We took with us about five-and-forty dogs, of high and low degree, our little beagles modestly bringing up the rear. Some half dozen huge hounds of enormous stature followed the head piqueur in couples, to be used in case of need ; and truly they were the most for-

midable opponents that could have been brought against the boars.

I was absolutely alarmed at the number of barrels I counted, and heartily wished the party diminished by at least two-thirds. However, there was no help for it, so I went on with as much forced gaiety as I could muster.

I had enlisted my little five-foot friend the marquis in my service, and he had valiantly promised me his powerful assistance. Indeed, he asked me more than once how many boars he should kill! Of course, I replied, as many as he could.

On arriving at the wood's side we were ordered by our commander-in-chief to disperse; and as I had some topographical knowledge of the *locale* from recent experience, I made for the spot I had occupied on the former occasion, where my faithful follower had fallen. My

friend the marquis kept close to my heels, and was very anxious to load, in case we might tumble upon a stray boar. Recommending patience, I requested him to follow ; and upon arriving at the *carrefour* (or crossway) I halted, and commenced making due preparation.

Having loaded my favourite "John Manton," I performed the same office for my companion, and handing him the "Westley Richards," (one of the best guns I ever shot out of,) I planted him at the head of a riding, a little in the rear.

The major part of the expedition had proceeded about a quarter of a mile from me, and had planted their *tireurs* at convenient distances. This proceeding necessarily occupied some time, and the confusion (inseparable from a French *chasse*) increased in no slight degree by the number of "aspirants" to boar-killing fame.

In about an hour, a distant shout, re-

peated by the several sentinels, announced that operations had commenced. The heterogeneous pack of French hounds were cheered into the covert, and soon gave forth some pleasing sounds. The "music" was really good, and it was evident they were on the track of a boar. I heard several shots; but every one unaccompanied by the exulting shout which invariably attends a "palpable hit."

No mischief had as yet been done, and I was waiting in feverish anxiety for the approach of one of the swine.

At length, my little Marquis exclaimed, "Tiens ! il y a quelque chose." I turned round, and saw my friend on the present. He had observed something in the bushes, which to his excited imagination presented itself in the shape of a boar. Another glimpse, and—bang ! But, oh ! such a yell followed ! Gentle reader, an unfortunate French, ill-begotten, bastard

hound had strayed from the pack, and quitted his brethren to meet with death. Monsieur le Marquis had shot Tamballon, a particular favourite of the head piqueur's.

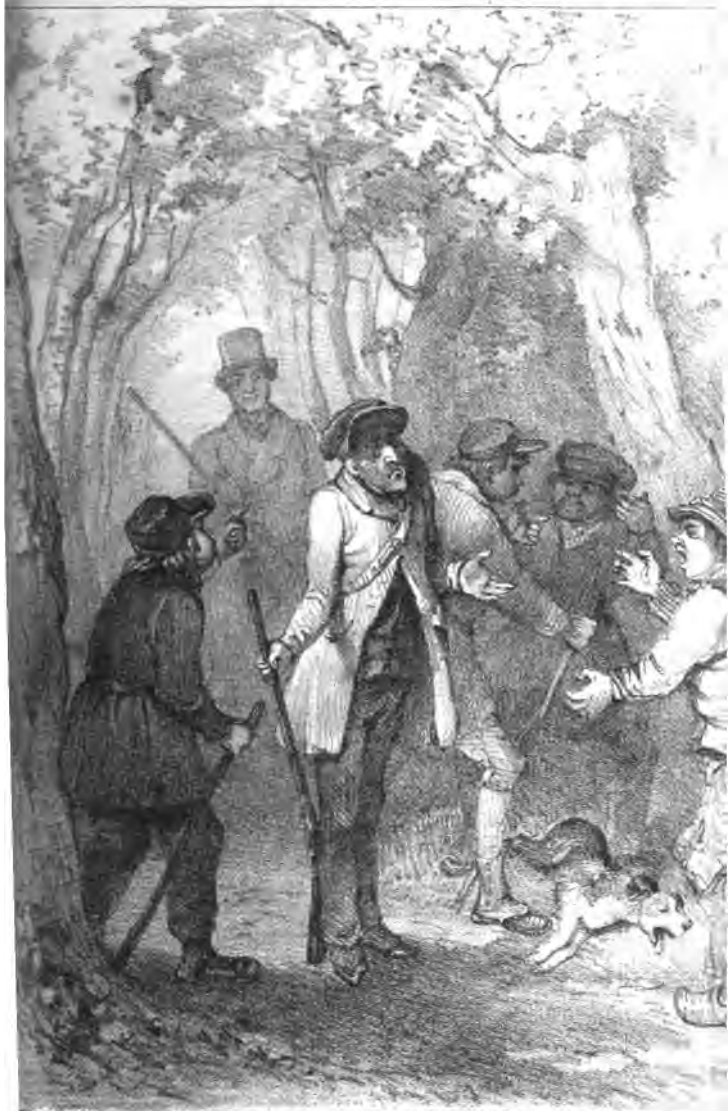
"Mon Dieu !" exclaimed the Marquis, "qu'est-ce que c'est que ça ?"

"Why, you have shot a dog," I exclaimed.

"Diable !" responded he, "c'est un petit malheur."

In a few minutes my companion was surrounded by a crowd of the followers, including stable-boys and idlers, who were loud and not over-ceremonious in their vituperations; rank and age were forgotten; and to the marquis's evident chagrin he was compelled to submit to the choleric remonstrances his awkwardness had called forth.

I did all in my power to soothe the angry feelings which had been so inop-



*J. H. Hamer del.*

*Don Killagie. Lith'd by the*

THE MARQUIS KILLS THE KEEPER'S DOG instead of a BOAR

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portunately excited; and having in some degree restored order and quiet, I despatched the beaters to their respective stands, the marquis still remaining with me.

They had not left me long before I heard several shots, although at a great distance from the spot where I had planted myself; but, from the confused noise and occasional shouting, I conjectured that some work was going on. I was not kept long in suspense; a shot from the position taken up by Mr. W——, nearest to mine, announced that the enemy was in sight. "Look out!—Look out!" was loudly halloo'd by my countryman. In less than a minute, a boar, about three-parts grown, and evidently wounded, crossed the path, about fifty yards from where I was standing, but at too quick a pace for me to make sure of hitting him; I accordingly reserved my fire for a more certain opportunity.

I was on the *qui vive*, as may be imagined, and waiting in breathless anxiety for one or more of the bristly monsters. The deep and mellow-toned notes of the gigantic hounds gave me hopes that I should soon have occasion to call Mr. John Manton to my aid ; nor was I mistaken : at the very extremity of the narrow alley, as far as the eye could reach, I perceived a small herd of three or four boars, scampering towards Monsieur le Marquis and myself. I beckoned to my little hero and desired him to take up a position on my left, and prepare for action. Screwing his courage to the sticking-place, he did so ; but it was evident that he wished himself snug within the walls of his brother noble's chateau.

By this time, three boars were coming within range of our barrels, and I begged of my friend to be cool and select his animal, advising him to aim at the one on

his left. Luckily, the largest was on my side, and a huge monster he was ; I fired, and had the satisfaction of seeing him roll over. The other two, nothing daunted, came on with more of anger than of sorrow depicted in their swinish countenances. I called out to the marquis to fire. Up went the gun ; “ *Tirez,*” said I ; no report.

By this time, the two boars, more than half-grown, were close upon us, and I really was apprehensive for my friend, and implored of him to exercise his agility by jumping on one side, and to allow “ *ces B—— là*” (as he termed them) to pass.

I had scarcely uttered the caution, ere I was obliged to set the example myself, otherwise I might have repented of my rashness. I jumped from the riding into the copse, over a small ditch, most politely yielding the right of path to the fero-

cious-looking animals. Not so, however, my little marquis; he appeared to be perfectly paralyzed, and was rivetted to the spot, but for a moment only. I had scarcely secured for myself a safe landing before I beheld my companion in arms extended on his sitting parts, bellowing most lustily, and ejaculating, with an energetic volubility, a string of "*sacre nom de Dieus*, B——s" and "F——s," and similar endearing terms, which are only to be understood upon an intimate acquaintance with the Gallic vernacular.

Upon accosting him, I found that one of the wild swine, totally oblivious of his nobility, had incontinently rushed between his spindle-shanks, thereby disturbing the equipoise of his anatomy. The unruly and unmannerly boar upset him, without inflicting any further injury to the little nobleman's precious person than

an unusual degree of alarm and a trifling laceration of the left leg above the ankle, about the spot where it is to be presumed a calf had formerly adorned the Marquis's extremities.

Upon inquiring of my noble friend why he had not fired at the brutes, he replied, that the locks of the gun were so *diablement durs* that he could not pull the trigger. Upon examining my Westley Richards, I found that my nervous companion, in his agitation, had forgotten to cock his gun. Here the riddle was solved. Indeed I suspected as much ; for this with Mr. Westley Richards's guns is not a common fault ; indeed, generally speaking, his triggers are nearly as finely set as a *double détente*, or hair-trigger ; and this particular gun was very tender indeed, so that the excuse offered puzzled me the more.

My friend promised to be more cir-

cumspect for the future; and as soon as he had recovered his self-possession, I halloo'd for the *piqueurs*, one of whom came to my assistance, and accompanied me in search of the boar I had knocked over. We found the beast a few yards from the spot where I had wounded him; he was lying under a tree in the agonies of death. I had hit him in the chest, and the ball had perforated his lungs, and made sad havoc with his intestines. Being *à l'extrémité*, as my companion the *piqueur* expressed himself, the business of despatching the boar was soon accomplished. A mark was placed to guide the collectors of the game at the termination of our day's sport, and we left the swine alone in his glory.

On returning to my position, I rallied the Marquis upon his want of presence of mind. He attributed his lack of nerve to the potations of the preceding evening;

but he undertook to slay every animal that came in his way, if I would but allow him to imbibe some of the venerable Cognac in my flask. To this *spirited* proposition I acceded ; and after priming the old gentleman's courage, we waited for some more sport.

I had just discussed the merits of a sandwich, when the shouts of my neighbours aroused our attention. A couple of stanch hounds had tracked a wounded boar, and tackled him. The beast was doing all in his power to rid himself of his assailants, and was making for the plain ; the dogs, however, would not be shaken off, and hung with a ferocious pertinacity, which baffled all attempts at escape, and which would have done credit to any of Mr. Charles Aistrop's pets in the Westminster pit. I ran to the spot, as I was not a little anxious as to the fate of the courageous animals. One poor dog was

ripped up alive ; but the other, as if determined to avenge the fate of his less lucky companion, stuck to the boar like a leech, and pinned the brute to the ground until one of the *piqueurs* came up, and, with a *couteau de chasse*, silenced the foe.

On returning to my stand I found Monsieur le Marquis in ecstasies at the result of the capture ; and he expressed a hope—although I must confess I doubted his sincerity—that he might have an opportunity of slaying one of the *animaux* himself.

As fortune would have it, his skill, or rather, I should say, his courage, was to be put to the test sooner than he bargained for. He had scarcely finished speaking when a patriarch of a boar made his appearance not forty yards below us. Now “Monsieur le Marquis,” I exclaimed, “prenez garde !”

“ Mon Dieu !” said the Frenchman,  
“ c’est un monstre.”

“ C’est vrai,” I replied. I raised my gun to my shoulder, ready for the attack, hoping that I might be fortunate enough to obtain a cross-shot. In this I was mistaken, for the boar came jogging leisurely on, perfectly regardless of our august presence.

“ Mais regardez donc comme il est hardi ce B—— là,” cried the Marquis.

“ Silence,” said I.

At this moment I thought I had a favourable opportunity, and, regardless of my *chasseur* on the left, I let fly with my right barrel, but without any visible effect: the bullet must have hit one of the cheek-bones, and have glanced off, for the *sanglier* still kept advancing. I saluted him with the second barrel: he staggered for a moment, when, suddenly mustering a frenzied resolution, he made

a desperate rush at us. I confess for the moment I was puzzled how to act ; but recovering my presence of mind, I betook myself to a leap at the ditch before-mentioned, and cleared it.

On looking about for the Marquis, he was nowhere to be seen, and I became seriously alarmed for his safety : as soon as the *monstre* had passed, I called aloud for my companion. I received a scarcely audible answer, and could not possibly guess from whence the sound proceeded. I looked around me, but could perceive no one. After several callings and answers, I took it into my head that the Marquis was “ poking his fun at me,” as the Yankees say, when, upon looking upwards, I discovered my friend most comfortably and securely seated on the branch of a tree. After laughing most heartily at his forethought, I commended his prudence, and begged of him to keep

a good look-out, in order that he might apprise me should any more of the wild swine make their appearance. He promised compliance, and expressed his conviction of being able to do more execution *sub tegmine fagi* than in the ordinary manner.

To say the truth, I was as well pleased as the little man himself that he had left me, as I was convinced he was rather a hindrance than otherwise in the event of much sport being thrown in my way. Leaving my friend in his exalted position, I will proceed to describe the result of this day's work. I killed, before dusk, four boars, two large, one three-parts grown, and one young one; Mr. W—— killed five; Captain P——, three, and a wolf—a tremendous brute. The other visitors despatched some one, some two, some three, a-piece.

The sport was exceedingly good, and,

as far as regarded myself, I was marvelously well-pleased ; albeit, I should have killed two more boars but for my friend the Marquis. But I ought not to complain, for he afforded me an infinity of amusement the whole of the day. He did not fire a single shot, for, according to his own account, a branch of the tree was always in his way. We returned to the chateau just before dusk ; but I had some difficulty in getting the little Marquis down the tree. How he got up I never could make out, unless his fears made him as nimble as a monkey.

## CHAPTER VI.

Monsieur Le Marquis again—The boar's head—  
Extraordinary bed-fellow—Another day's cock-  
shooting—Monsieur le Curé—Dinner at the  
Presbytère—Generous wine—Its effects—Loss  
of a spoon and fork—Where found—The Curé's  
housekeeper.

As soon as the operations of the toilet  
were concluded, (of which, by the way,  
my valorous friend the Marquis stood in  
no little need from divers causes, which  
I forbear mentioning,) we assembled in  
the *salon* prior to discussing the savoury  
viands, which, by the vivifying odours

that greeted our olfactories, gave promise of comforting our empty stomachs and refreshing the inward man most satisfactorily.

The repast, as usual, was *recherché* in the extreme, and gave proof of the consummate skill of the artist who presided over the *cuisine*. Having some little knowledge in these matters, and having on more than one occasion partaken of Mr. Ude's *hors-d'œuvres* and *chef-d'œuvres*, I may be allowed to be somewhat of a judge, and I can undertake unhesitatingly to pronounce that that distinguished connoisseur in gastronomy, Lord A——, himself, would be sorely puzzled as to which of these *Vatels* to award the palm.

In the event of any calamity befalling Crockford's knight of the *casserole*, I know not any *chef* on the Continent who is endowed with pretensions to fill Ude's place, save the *artiste* of our host.

He is a *cordon bleu du premier rang*. Long may he live in his vocation, the envy of all compounders of *coulis*, *glaces*, and *béchamels*; and long may he administer to the discriminating palates of my brother gastronomes on the other side of the Channel, amongst whom he has not a more devoted or sincere admirer than myself.

Many were the jokes levelled at my climbing friend after we were seated at the dinner-table, all of which he bore with becoming good humour. A practical illustration of our host's fun, however, disconcerted the little *chasseur* for a moment. A huge boar's head, *artiste-ment arrangé aux truffes*, of which an abundant supply was always kept at the chateau, was placed by direction of our Amphytrion before Monsieur le Marquis. The simultaneous bursts of laughter which followed, to say nothing of the

suppressed titters of the attendants, were of themselves sufficient to nettle the choleric little man. But he saw there was no help for it; so, summoning up all the resolution he could call to his aid, he said, “ C’est égal, ma foi — il faut rire ;” whereupon he began the task of dissecting the savoury caput before him.

He parried as well as he could the many witticisms which were directed towards him, and consoled himself by discussing the merits of the various *sautés*, *salmis*, *fricassées*, *entrées*, *entremets*, and *hors-d’œuvres* and sipping every description of wine contained in Monsieur de C——’s well-stored cellar.

In talking over the sport of the day it was decided to give the dogs and the boars a rest ; in consequence of which arrangement, I proposed to Captain P—— and Mr. W——, as we were partaking of our

coffee in the *salon*, that we should have another day's diversion amongst the cocks. I had sent a trusty messenger to our 'little box at Guingamp for my favourite setter, as, from the extraordinary sport we had met with, I expected I should stand in need of her assistance on a future occasion.

We agreed, therefore, *entre nous*, that we should sally forth as soon as it was light. We passed an agreeable and rational evening, enlivened by music, singing, *boston* and *ecarté*, and retired to our dormitories about eleven o'clock.

I was in the act of making preparations for betaking myself between the sheets, when I was startled by a most tremendous uproar, accompanied by screams and yells issuing from the lungs potential of Monsieur le Marquis. Hastening on my dressing-gown, I ran out into the corridor to ascertain the cause of the tumult, and

there I found all the inmates and visitors, who had left their rooms with the same motive as myself, and we one and all proceeded to the door of the little noble's sleeping apartment.

There we found him ensconced in a woollen nightcap, looking the picture of horror and dismay. "Regardez donc, Messieurs," he cried, very disconsolately ; "regardez donc comme on m'arrange ici ; c'est indigne ! Je m'en irai demain. Nom de Dieu ! a-t'on jamais vu une pareille horreur !"

Our eyes naturally followed the index of his right hand, when we beheld most comfortably laid out, with its head reclining on a down pillow, one of the animals that had been slain in the morning. Some mischievous wights had defiled the Marquis's virtuous bed by depositing the unclean beast between his spotless sheets, and the savage and bristly

Dark Night, 1850, in the scene





monster, ferocious to behold even in death, formed an appalling contrast to the snow-white drapery by which he was surrounded.

It appeared that the Marquis, little apprehensive of such a bed-fellow had jumped unsuspectingly into his bed, having with his wonted caution extinguished his taper. His horror and astonishment at coming in contact with the *sanglier* may be conceived, and hence arose the screams which had called us from our rooms.

The noble owner of the chateau was the last person who presented himself at the Marquis's door, and entered the apartment just as we had discovered the cause of alarm. Of course, in the character of host, he was per-force compelled to look grave on the occasion, and condoled with my little friend on the mishap, and joined with him in expressing his indignation at the ill-timed joke, although I

very much question if he did not enjoy it as much as any of us.

The culprit, as may be supposed, could not be discovered ; indeed, any indifferent spectator would have imagined that the real perpetrator of this iniquitous trick was far away, for all present joined in condemning such practical jokes, especially upon so venerable and august a personage. Fresh linen, &c., were instantly supplied for the Marquis's bed, in lieu of the soiled drapery, which, with the object of his detestation, was instantly removed.

After calming the old gentleman's nerves, which were sorely agitated, and pouring some *eau sucrée à la fleur d'orange* down his aristocratic œsophagus, we left him to his slumbers, not without laughing in our sleeves at the exaggerated fear of the poor little man. Notwithstanding this interruption to our repose, we were

up and accoutred for the field by daylight, and we sallied forth from the mansion with as little noise as possible, taking the holly bushes on our way to the low lands.

To our surprise, we did not find a single bird where we had disturbed so many on the previous occasion, and, as may be supposed, our spirits were considerably damped at this unexpected ill-fortune.

On approaching the alders I separated from my companions, leaving Captain P—— and Mr. W—— to beat the woods on the left, while I followed in the direction pointed out to me by the keeper as the best and most favourite beat. After toiling for nearly five hours, I only killed as many birds out of seven shots ; so strange it is, that to-day one may stumble on woodcocks in plenty, and to-morrow not a feather will be found.

I returned to the chateau rather dis-

appointed with my day's work. I found my countrymen had preceded me, and were equally out of humour; they had only killed three couple between them. Our kind and attentive host had provided a substantial breakfast for us, of which we partook most ravenously, and did ample justice to the *patés de Strasbourg* and *Perigueux*, to say nothing of some appetizing *cotelettes*, *omelettes*, and other susci-tating edibles.

After our repast, we were induced to accompany the Marquis on a visit to Monsieur le Curé at the village, about half a league distant. We set off for the parsonage, mounted on some steady little nags, of a race peculiar to Lower Brittany, an animal somewhat between a Welsh pony and a Suffolk cob, rough and punchy withal, but hardy and sure-footed in the extreme. In less than three-quarters of an hour we were at the portal of the

*presbytère*, where we were welcomed by the *curé* with a flattering cordiality.

During our ride the little noble had descanted largely on the numerous good qualities of the priest, describing him as a *bon enfant, rempli de talent, gai, franc, aimant le bon vin*; and that his *cave* was *supérieurement bien montée*.

With these recommendations, we were prepared to like the ecclesiastic *d'avance*; nor did his jolly, rubicund, mirth-inspiring countenance belie the encomiums his noble friend had passed upon him. Monsieur le Curé had heard of our fame as *chasseurs*, and complimented us on the execution and slaughter we had committed in the neighbourhood. He pressed us to taste some of his wine, which he assured us, with the glee of a connoisseur, was of a particularly good vintage; and truly the sample was a good one, and gave proof of a well-selected cellar.

The tray, with cakes, biscuits, and wine, was handed round by a buxom damsel, numbering between thirty and forty summers, with a pleasing proportion of *embon-point*,—in short, such a female as would be a dangerous as well as an inciting inmate with a person doomed by the Catholic religion to celibacy.

I could not help forming an opinion, from the glances which were interchanged between Monsieur le Curé and this personage, that a greater degree of intimacy subsisted than was consistent with the vows which this convivial son of the church had been compelled to take. However evil my thoughts may have been as affecting the chastity of the female, or the continence of the *curé*, I kept them to myself, although my suspicions were confirmed, as will be seen presently.

After taking us all over the house, his garden, orchard, and poultry-yard, he

pressed us to remain and partake of *la fortune du pot* ; but we pleaded a promise to return to the chateau in excuse for refusing his hospitality. Before our departure, however, Monsieur le Curé exacted a promise from the Marquis and ourselves to dine with him on the following day, (Sunday,) promising us a treat in the shape of some *chevreuil mariné*, which had been sent to him by a neighbouring *seigneur* ; and he also hinted at some *anguilles en matelotte*, and other delicacies, winding up his bill of fare with the additional inducement of some *Chambertin* of 1811, "*Le véritable vin de la comète, mes amis, et vous verrez.*"

After a parting benediction, we left the vicarage, well satisfied with our visit, and much pleased with the hospitable character of its occupant.

On returning to the chateau we were glad to find that our host was gratified at

our having paid a visit to Monsieur le Curé, and intimated his surprise that we, as Protestants, should be divested of the prejudice (by which we are supposed to be influenced) to such an extent as to visit a Catholic priest. We assured him that, although professing the Protestant faith, we were not bigots, and we humbly conceived that man had the right vested in him of choosing his own path to the realms of bliss ; and that we merely went to pay a friendly visit to the individual, and not to bore him with our opinions on matters that concerned our Maker and our own consciences. “Vous êtes des bons enfans,” wast he reply ; “et j’inviterai ce sacré gourmand” (meaning Monsieur le Curé) “pour la semaine prochaine.”

Our evening passed off in much the same manner as the preceding ones, and our little Marquis was unmolested, save by a few harmless observations touching

his recent adventures in the ball-room and the field. After breakfast on the morrow we set out for the *Curé's* hospitable-house in a *berline* appertaining to our host, as he hinted in rather plain terms that it was deemed unsafe to ride home after imbibing the reverend gentleman's nectar.

We were ushered into the comfortable and well-furnished dwelling by the priest himself, who came to the garden-gate in his canonicals to welcome us. About two o'clock the soup was announced by the portly dame of whom I have made mention; and whoever presided in the kitchen is entitled to our gratitude, for a better served-up dinner could not have been expected or desired.

As the contents of the bottles disappeared, the *Curé's* spirits mounted, and a more entertaining or witty companion it

would be difficult to find. The wine was exquisite, and where our convivial Amphytrion had culled the juices of the renowned vintages I cannot conceive. Such generous juice must have inspired the greatest dolt that ever breathed. As far as I am concerned, it set my mischievous propensities at work, otherwise the following idea could never have found its way into my pate.

I have before hinted at my suspicion as to an undue intimacy existing between Monsieur le Curé and his housekeeper. To ascertain this interesting fact I resorted to the following expedient.

From having seen every room in the house, I was perfectly acquainted with the *locale* of each sleeping apartment. During a temporary absence from the *salle-à-manger* I discovered a basket of plate in the hall. I pounced upon a

silver spoon and fork, and deposited them, unobserved, under the counterpane and between the sheets of the captivating housekeeper's bed.

I returned to the dining-room, and partook of "potations pottle deep," until I was fain to cry, "hold, enough." Such a drinking bout I have seldom had since I quitted the neighbourhood of Oxford, where I could, upon a pinch, swallow my four bottles with some of my "Brazen-nose" and "Christ Church" friends. We parted in high glee and good humour with our Bacchanalian priest, and hiccupped an affectionate "adieu" about ten o'clock, brimful of claret, burgundy, and champagne.

On the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday we had three *grandes chasses*, which I shall presently speak of; but I must finish my tale. On the Thursday following we rode over to pay our re-

spects to Monsieur le Curé, after his kindness and hospitality. He did not by any means receive us with his wonted affability—his manner was evidently constrained and distantly polite. I apologized for not having called before, stating that the *chasse aux bois* had occupied our time. This apologetical explanation produced no good effect.

At length, taking Monsieur le Curé aside, I frankly taxed him with being cool, and asked him what we had done to cause such a striking alteration in his manner. After some little hesitation, he told me that a spoon and fork were missing, which he thought *bien extraordinaire*.

Here the murder was out, and my riddle solved into the bargain—the plan had succeeded, for it was evident the housekeeper had not slept *in her own bed*, otherwise she must have found the missing spoon and fork.





*Doyle & Co. Ltd. is the Queen*

THE MISSING SPOON & FORK discovered in the Bed of the CURÉ'S HOUSEKEEPER.

*H. J. Hamerton.*

I conducted the *curé* up to the bedroom, pulled down the coverlid, and shewed him his lost property. The self-convicted priest stood abashed, and blushed claret, for red he already was. At last he burst into a loud laugh, and giving me an affectionate pat on the cheek and a dig in the ribs, told me I was a *malin*, but a *bon enfant*; and I led him back to my companions with all his good-humour restored. I told the story on my return to the chateau, which highly amused our worthy host.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Another grande chasse aux sangliers—Valour of Monsieur le Marquis—A badger hunt—Capital sport—The Marquis and his pony—Disagreeable consequence of his ride—Narrow escape of our host—Departure from the chateau, and return to Guingamp.*

WE reached the chateau in safety, in spite of the copious libations we had indulged in at Monsieur le Curé's, and we found our host and his guests in the salon, busily employed at *boston*, *piquet*, and *ecarté*. As soon as the former had finished his *partie*, he informed us that we were to

hold ourselves in readiness for another *chasse aux bois* ; the early part of the day to be devoted to boar shooting, and the afternoon to hunting the badger.

I must confess I was not *overjoyed* on the announcement of this intelligence, as I anticipated an aching head and an unsteady hand, in consequence of having partaken so liberally of the contents of the curé's cellar. The process of ascending the scale of the different degrees of inebriation is pleasant enough, and the progressive exhilaration of spirits very delightful ; but, odds ! thirst and soda water ! the *descending* the said scale to the sombre zero of sobriety is sorry work, and the concomitant twinges anything but enviable.

In the present instance, however, I was not doomed to the racks and tortures I expected ; for, thanks to the honest wine-merchant who had furnished the un-

adulterated potations, I awoke without any unpleasant symptom to remind me of the previous night's excess, and I joined the huntsmen in the hall as fresh, and with as cool a head, as if I had been Father Matthew's guest for a month.

After priming the party with some strong *consommé*, *café noir*, and divers *gouttes* of old Cognac, our commander-in-chief gave the word, "En avant, mes amis!" and we sallied forth in battle array.

With infinite difficulty I had prevailed upon Monsieur le Marquis to accompany us. To oblige *me*, he said he would do anything, and could not refuse *ma politesse*, as he was pleased to term my solicitation. He assured me he should not leave my side, and that he would render me every assistance in his power in the event of his valuable services being called in requisition.

The wood selected for this day's *chasse* was situated about a league from the chateau ; and the head *piqueur* gave me to understand that this new covert was *remplis de sangliers et de chevreuils*. In consideration of the trifling remuneration of two francs, the *piqueur* undertook to place my bald-pated companion and myself in a most advantageous position ; and after leading us half a mile through the wood, he planted us on an eminence commanding an extensive piece of fern and low brushwood, which afforded an excellent opportunity for despatching the *sangliers* as they might be routed from their lairs.

The Marquis was delighted at our elevated position, and seemed to fancy himself more secure than on the last occasion. We were left to ruminate on this hillock for upwards of an hour ; at length a message was brought to us by one of

the followers that everything was in readiness. Some delay had occurred in placing the numerous *chasseurs*, but we learnt that the dogs were to be thrown in almost immediately.

In about a quarter of an hour after this announcement, we heard one or two of our diminutive Tonbridge beagles challenging, which was speedily succeeded by the more sonorous and deep-toned music of the large blood-hounds, of whom I have before made honourable mention. From the earnestness of the dogs, I was convinced they were on the track of a boar. They were now within a few yards of our little mount, but no *sanglier* had as yet presented himself to our notice.

I was looking out most anxiously for a shot, when my attention was called off by an exclamation of "*Mon Dieu !*" from my neighbour. On turning round, I perceived

the Marquis's eyes fixed upon an object in one of the bushes not twenty yards from us.

He was absolutely transfixed, and appeared to be without the power of motion. The few stray hairs that protruded from his foraging cap stood bristling forth on each side of his noble head : he was trembling violently, and unable to speak. I could not immediately discover the cause of his sudden alarm ; but, upon a closer inspection, I perceived an old, ferocious-looking swine, gazing with no very complacent aspect at the Chevalier de St. Louis.

The boar appeared to me to be making up his mind as to the propriety of a rush at my friend, or the expediency of beating a retreat, instead of acting offensively. Fearing he might adopt the latter measure, I thought it more prudent to give him notice to quit. I accordingly cocked both barrels, and let fly my right at the centre

of the *sanglier's* pericranium, which I fortunately shattered. The brute advanced about two paces, staggered, and fell ; whereupon the Marquis, to make sure of the fallen foe, most valorously sent a bullet through the carcass of the *monstre* ; and I complimented my chivalric friend on his prowess, at which he was exceedingly gratified.

I had scarcely loaded my own and the Marquis's gun before two beautiful *chevreuil* bounded out of the thick cover, and stood panting in the open space a little to my left. I pulled my little hero by the sleeve, and, pointing to the deer, whispered him to select the one to my right, and to fire when I did ; and raising my gun at the same moment, sent a bullet under the shoulder of the beautiful animal before me ; its companion was more fortunate, and was *quitte pour la peur*, as our continental neighbours say.

Nothing would persuade the Marquis but that he had most desperately wounded the other *chevreuil* ; and he hinted that but for the probability of encountering one of those *b—— de bêtes* (the *sangliers*), he would go in search of his victim. I was satisfied in my own mind the little man had not done any mischief, but I allowed him to enjoy the satisfaction his lively imagination had given rise to.

I had heard for the last hour between twenty and thirty shots, and the shouts, which were borne along by the breeze, announced the work of death to be progressing rapidly. With such an incentive, I was not long in making preparations for another encounter, and had not been many minutes on the look out, when a family of boars and boarlings cantered leisurely past through the fern, almost at our feet.

“ Now, Monsieur le Marquis,” said I, “ take your time, and you will be sure to do some execution.” I selected one of the older ones for my spoil, and perforated his bristly hide, thereby making the patriarch spin, much to his discomfiture, and he was per force constrained to allow his tribe to depart from before his eyes. The Marquis fired at a boarling, and *mirabile dictu!* hit him in the leg; the young one turned round and was hobbling off on his three remaining available pins, when I saluted the youngster with the contents of my left barrel, and stopped his further progress.

About noon, a messenger was sent to us to announce that the badger-hunt was to be postponed to the following day, as the earths had not been securely stopped on the previous night, and that Monsieur le Comte (our host) had determined upon continuing in the wood until the after-

noon, as there was an abundance of boar and *chevreuil* for our amusement; we were also given to understand that a supply of refreshments, both liquid and solid, was on the way from the chateau, our provident host having sent an aide-de-camp to his well-stored larder for a basket of edibles, *sans compter* innumerable bottles of wine, which were to accompany the provender.

I was talking to this welcome messenger, when he pointed to the carcass of the *chevreuil*, and exclaimed, "*Mon Dieu! qu'est ce que c'est que ça.*" I turned round and saw a hideous monster in the shape of a hungry wolf, which was making rather too free with the haunch of the dead deer. I instantly aimed at the brute, who was endeavouring to draw the dainty animal through the thicket; most fortunately, my bullet took effect, and this most unsightly of all the brute crea-

tion was in a moment as lifeless as the symmetrical *chevreuil* by his side.

A sturdy youth, in a peasant's garb, soon made his appearance, with a well-filled basket under his arm, and we were not long in discovering and discussing its contents, and I need not add, they were very acceptable. As soon as we had fortified our craving stomachs with this rural meal, we put ourselves in readiness for more active occupation, and during the afternoon I had the good fortune to kill another boar and one more *chevreuil*.

About four o'clock, the horns and bugles of the several *piqueurs* gave note of a cessation of hostilities, one of whom came to our stand to collect the dead game. Not one of the dogs would approach the wolf, and he was ignominiously hung upon the branch of a tree, where we left him as food for the crows.

After the whole party had been mus-

tered at the wood's side, we proceeded homeward in marching order, with a cart bringing up the rear, containing the spoil of the day.

On the following morning, I was disturbed by the vilest discord of sounds that ever assailed the tympanum of man ; such an infernal row never was heard ; and I most heartily wished the whole fraternity of *chasseurs* at the bottom of the Red Sea, for I was sorely disinclined to leave my comfortable bed to scamper after a badger.

I was nevertheless compelled to put a good face upon it ; so venting my wrath in hearty anathemas on the chattering Frenchmen under my window, and sending the badgers to an unnameable place, I bolted from under the bed-clothes, and after performing my ablutions in iced water, found my brother sportsmen in the act of assembling in the hall. I had the

malicious satisfaction of perceiving that my companions were as little eager for the fray as myself, for they one and all looked unutterable things, and evidently were disconcerted at being turned out of their warm beds.

A group of apple-munching urchins were assembled in the court-yard, and their faces, hands, and knees, begrimed with earth, clay, and mud, gave proof that they had been toiling all night to the exclusion of the badgers from their subterraneous abodes. We were informed by these juvenile assistants that the badgers were in great force, and that we might expect much sport.

About a dozen cobs and ponies were provided for a chosen few; Captain P——, Mr. W——, and myself were among the elect, not forgetting my friend, Monsieur le Marquis. The pedestrians were armed with long poles, to enable them to leap

the ditches, in the event of the badgers taking to steeple-chasing. After the never-failing *gouttes* had been handed round, the dogs were paraded, and verily such a motley group of quadrupeds I never saw congregated.

First came our own little beagles, perfect and beautiful of their kind; then some half-bred French mongrels with a dash of hound; after which came some animals with a cross of the terrier certainly, but the "genus" cur was strongly developed by more than one indication of low degree.

After an unusual quantum of jabbering and swearing amongst the attendants, called forth by a diversity of opinion as to the *modus operandi* for the day, all preliminaries were finally arranged, and we set off in quest of the badgers.

In less than an hour we arrived at the side of a small covert overhanging a ri-

*deau* (or bank) of considerable extent: at this halting-place an animated and rather vituperative discussion arose as to the right of priority of the quadrupeds; after much wrangling, the honour of precedence was accorded, out of *complaisance*, to *les chiens Anglais*, whereupon they were immediately uncoupled, and to work they went.

In a few minutes old "Music," (the mother of half the pack,) and her trusty helpmate, "Reveller" by name, gave us to understand that something was in the wind; presently the younger ones chimed in with the leaders, and a full chorus of mellifluous music gave us hopes of a little amusement.

A well-known Leicestershire View halloo from my friend Captain P—— announced the departure of a badger. Away we went, helter-skelter, down the *rideau*, the badger about fifty or sixty yards in

advance, and the dogs in full cry. He pulled foot at a marvellously good pace ; indeed, I had not the slightest idea that these growers of shaving-brushes had so much "go" in them. He was evidently making for a wood about half-a-mile before us, in which several "earths" had been stopped, and if he could have held the pace, would have succeeded ; but some three or four long-legged terriers were evidently in a fair way to defeat his intentions ; they outstript the pigmies in speed, and were gaining fast upon the unfortunate badger.

Such hunting I never before witnessed ; the scene altogether was most ludicrous, and baffles all description. Captain P—— my Leicestershire friend, and myself, were nearly convulsed with laughing. Such a field of sportsmen ! — such cattle — such turns-out altogether ! — the whooping,

the hallooing, and the scampering. Much did I lament that the talented Mr. Cruikshank was not at my side, for nothing short of his magical pencil could convey any idea of this meeting: no donkey-race ever equalled it.

On looking round for my friend the Marquis, I perceived him planted pretty nearly where we had left him, on the bank. His Rosinante, it appeared, had differed with its noble rider as to the propriety of progressing, and thought it advisable to remain *in statu quo*; and acting on this principle, stood his ground in defiance of threats, entreaties, kicks, thumps, and coaxings. Ever and anon a flourish in the air of the little man's stick gave promise of an impending whack on the rough hide of his Bucephalus, but without producing the desired result.

While Monsieur le Marquis was con-

demned, *malgré lui*, to act the part of spectator, we were advancing rapidly on the object of the chase; the dogs were close upon the heels of the badger, who, finding all attempt at escape utterly hopeless, boldly faced about and acted on the defensive.

The jaded animal kept the dogs at bay for some time with great courage and obstinacy, but at last was overpowered by numbers, and was butchered by the peasants, who were armed with poles and clubs, with which they belaboured the brute until he fell beneath their blows.

This was badger No. 1,—four more met a similar fate, an account of which may well be dispensed with. Such an apology for a hunt—in fact, such a farce altogether, I never assisted at; but the natives thought it all exceedingly fine; and our host himself, with infinite *naïveté*, and in perfect earnest, asked me if our fox-hunt-

ing, of which he had heard so much, was to be compared to it !

After despatching the first badger, we re-ascended the *rideau* with the double motive of finding another and of rescuing the Marquis from the unpleasant predicament he was placed in, owing to the misunderstanding between himself and his pony. As the self-willed animal seemed to hold in aversion all attempts at locomotion, many were the remedies applied to alter the brute's determination ; at length some mischievous wag hit upon the expedient of puncturation ; this was effected by a piece of furze-bush, which, being slipped under the pony's tail, worked a miracle : the remedy had no sooner been administered than a complete revolution took place in the mind and body of the obstinate little brute ; away he went with his astonished rider at a regular Meltonian pace, making for the chateau with all pos-



THE MARQUIS ON A REFRACTORY PONY.

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sible speed ; nor did we see anything more of either until our return home in the afternoon.

If there was a lack of what we Englishmen call sport, there was no want of good-humour and fun ; and I never remember to have laughed so heartily as on the day of the badger hunt.

After slaughtering the fourth unhappy beast we betook ourselves to a substantial farmer's, where, as we were informed by our host, he had undertaken we should present ourselves after the pleasures of the *chasse*.

This proprietor was one of Monsieur le Comte's principal tenants, and a wealthy man was he. A bountiful repast was provided for us, to which we did ample justice, and we were received most hospitably and kindly by this Brittany farmer ; and after paying our devoirs to the weighty

joints and huge pies, we were regaled with some *gloria*.

In case my readers should not know what *gloria* is, I will undertake to enlighten them. *Gloria* is a redolent mixture of coffee, loaf sugar (sugar-candy is better), and Cognac. To half a cupful of strong coffee add four large lumps of sugar, then pour over the back of your tea-spoon, with a steady hand, about as much fine old Cognac as you have of coffee; the spirit will of course float on the coffee, and great care must be taken that the two fluids mix not; then light your brandy, and when the evil spirit has evaporated, stir the beverage, and you will have one of the most delicious liqueurs imaginable; and, independently of its exhilarating powers, it will be found to possess digestive qualities in no ordinary degree; and I strongly recommend

this fascinating compound to all dyspeptic people. Only try it, gentle reader, and I am sure of your gratitude for this recipe.

We took leave of our farmer about three o'clock, and returned to the chateau; upon our arrival, and asking for Monsieur le Marquis, we were informed that his restive quadruped had carried him safely to the cattle-pen at the back of the stables, and that the little noble had been conveyed on a boy's back from the saddle to the hall-door, as there happened to be too much filth and wet to admit of the Marquis dismounting and soiling his *chaussure*.

On the way to my own chamber I had to pass the Marquis's room. I tapped at his door, and received for answer a scarcely audible "*entrez.*" Obeying the summons, I perceived his valet in the act of applying some healing plaster

"I' the imminent deadly breach ;"

for so it seemed to be thought by its possessor.

The truth must be told ; the Marquis had been sorely discomfited by the jolting of his self-willed pony—in fact, he was hardly able to *asseyez-vous* (as Solomon Gundy says) for a week. He was granted the indulgence of a soft pillow in his chair at dinner, and in spite of several twitches, *oufs*, and *aigh aigh aighs*, he got through the edible process with a tolerably good grace.

During the repast, our host informed us that some of his neighbours had sent a written request that we should attack the *sangliers* once more, and had named the following day, if not inconvenient to himself or us ; there was hardly time, indeed, to send a denial, and as some of the applicants lived at a considerable distance, we of course agreed to meet them, and it was arranged that we should start early in the

morning to gratify all parties. The poor little Marquis shook his head mournfully, and said that he had done with *la chasse*. “ *C'est fini, mes amis, je n'irai plus ;*” and, pointing retrospectively, added, “ *'Cre matin comme ça me fait du mal !*” His going was of course out of the question in the predicament he was in.

We retired to bed betimes, and were up very early, in order to give our visitors the meeting by the wood's side at the appointed hour.

We mustered as strongly as on the former day, with the exception of Monsieur le Marquis, who was left to the enjoyment of his plasters and pillows. Our host led the way, and, strange to say, (as will be seen presently,) requested me to shoot with him, which he had never done before. Of course I assented most readily, and kept by his side until we had joined the strangers. In about an hour, or rather

less, we arrived at the spot named for the *rendezvous*.

We found our neighbours had reached the wood about a quarter of an hour before us, and as soon as the greeting, introduction, and other formalities had passed, the brandy bottle was circulated ; and after pledging each other, and drinking to our *bonne chasse*, we separated for our respective stands.

I accompanied Monsieur le Comte and the principal *piqueur* to the head of an alley commanding an advantageous position ; here we halted, and waited for the signal from the several outposts, informing us when all was ready, and the dogs to be thrown into the covert. In about an hour a blast from a *cor de chasse* announced that the hounds were let loose, which was immediately followed by the dogs themselves giving tongue.

The head *piqueur*, who was not very

far from us, was shouting most lustily, but we saw nothing ; the dogs were now very busy, and the woods rang again with their music. A fine chevreuil bounded past us, and was shot in really good style by my host ; shortly afterwards a boar presented himself, which I fired at and wounded, but he got away. Mr. W——, who was not far from our stand, halloo'd for me to come to him.

I made my way down a narrow path, and found he had only two bullets with him, he having in the hurry of departure, and half asleep, left the remainder on his dressing-table. I supplied him with four, being all I could spare, and after chatting with him for a few minutes, set off to return to my companion, and had not proceeded fifty yards before my attention was arrested by the cries of a person in distress calling for assistance.

I ran to the spot, and found my vener-

able host in contest with a boar nearly full-grown. He was on his right knee, holding a long spear at the beast, which he had previously wounded with a bullet in its haunches. It was an animal of great power, and its eyes glistened like fire; two dogs were near their master, one lying on its back, bleeding profusely, with its body ripped open, while the other had fastened on the savage brute and pinned it by the ear.

Had it not been for the courage of this faithful animal, in all probability the master would have shared the fate of its prostrate companion. The *piqueur*, whose duty it was to have run to the assistance of Monsieur le Comte, stood aghast at some distance, apparently paralyzed by fear.

I ran instantly to the cowardly fellow, and snatching a spear from his hand, returned to rescue my host from the imminent danger he was placed in.

I attacked the boar in the rear, and goaded him, in the hope, or rather expectation, that he would turn upon me; nor was I mistaken; shaking off the dog, the brute rushed at me. I was fortunately perfectly cool and collected, which I attribute in a great measure to the circumstance of having seen my kind and hospitable friend in such peril. Be this as it may, my presence of mind did not forsake me, for I happily plunged the spear into the boar's chest as he attacked me, and buried the shaft in his lungs: he made one fearful struggle, and then fell powerless at my feet.

I must confess I was rejoiced at such a termination to the onset; nor was it until I had received the *embraces* and benedictions of my noble friend that I was fully aware of the risk I had incurred. I acted on the impulse of the moment, and the result was fortunate; but I do in all

honesty confess that I should be very sorry to have my prowess put to the test in a similar manner again. I shudder to this day when I think of it.

“ Vous m’avez sauvé la vie,” and other grateful acknowledgments were heaped upon me,—in short, I must not commit to paper all the compliments that were paid me. I was asked why I had not fired at the boar. My answer was, that I could not have done so without the risk of killing our host ; and I have every reason to believe I adopted the surer and more judicious course by resorting to the *piqueur’s* spear.

This functionary looked rather ashamed of himself, as well he might : he described himself as having been *petrifié, saisi*, and under all sorts of influences but the right one. In short, there was no excuse for his dastardly conduct.

My host was so agitated by the late

adventure that he requested me to return home with him. I did so of course, and by the time we reached the chateau, my noble friend was himself again.

The other *chasseurs* arrived about two hours afterwards, and had met with great sport; but I grieve to add that three dogs fell on this eventful day. Mr. W—— killed two boars and two chevreuril, Captain P—— one boar and three chevreuril.

We had a large party in the evening, which passed off very pleasantly. I have before stated that on the following day (Thursday) we had called upon the *curé*, and that he received us but coldly, and it may also be remembered that I cleared up the mystery of the missing *couvert*, much to the satisfaction of the ecclesiastic. Never shall I forget the expression of the *curé's* countenance when I pulled down the counterpane and sheets of his

housekeeper's bed, and displayed to his astonished sight the long-lost spoon and fork.

"Oh, ce sacré gueux," said my kind friend, "ces diables de curés sont des malins;" and during the remainder of the evening he was snapping his fingers and singing (to an air I suspect of his own composition) the following couplet—

" Oh que les curés sont heureux,  
Tous leurs enfans sont leur neveux ;"

which I rather suspect to be the case ; at least, I have known the insinuation verified in more than one instance.

Monsieur de C—— related to me an anecdote of this jolly *curé* which is highly characteristic of the ready-witted priest, and I give it *verbatim*. It will be remembered, that immediately after the revolu-

tion of 1830 a provisional government was nominated, and which existed for a few days, until Louis Philippe was proclaimed King of the French.

During this *interregnum*, and on the first Sunday after the startling news of the overthrow of the Bourbons had reached Lower Brittany, our *curé*, while performing mass at the little village church, came to that part of the ritual where a prayer is offered up in Latin for his most Christian Majesty. He had got as far as *Domine saluum fac*, when recollecting that *regem* would be inappropriate, seeing that there was no legal king, he substituted, with the most imperturbable gravity, *Domine saluum fac, le gouvernement provisoire!*—a happy instance of presence of mind, a no less pleasing admixture of French and Latin.

I much regret that I had not an opportunity of shaking this jovial son of the

church by the hand prior to my departure, but a melancholy cause prevented me. On the Saturday following, some letters were forwarded to me from Guingamp, which had arrived *via* Paris from England. They contained the mournful intelligence of the death of a near relative, and which painful circumstance called for my presence in London.

Captain P——, Mr. W——, and myself, therefore, with heartfelt regret, took leave of our kind and hospitable friend ; not, however, without expressing the deep sense we entertained of his unremitting attention and kindness, and the sincere pleasure we had derived while sojourning under his roof.

We arrived late in the evening at our sporting villa, and the following day I set off *en poste* in light marching order, leaving dogs, guns, and all my sporting *matériel* behind me, as I was not without hopes

of rejoining my fellow-countrymen as soon as the family business which called me to town would permit.

I took leave of my companions with unfeigned sorrow and regret, and jolted away most mournfully to Havre, from which port I purposed crossing to Southampton. On the afternoon of the fifth day from my departure, I was comfortably housed at the Dolphin, the comfort, cleanliness, and order of which celebrated inn presented a striking contrast to the hotel I had so lately quitted at Havre, where noise, inattention, dirt, and greasy fare, assailed me on all sides.

The melancholy event which called me to England having involved me in a suit in chancery, I was compelled, much against my inclination, to remain in town for some months, during which tantalizing period I received several communications from my friends on the other side of the

Channel, and was informed that they had received a pressing invitation from Mr. Martin Hawke at Tours, which they intended to accept ; and after having scoured the Tourraine country, they proposed taking up their quarters for a short time at Rennes, the capital of the Departement of Ille et Vilaine, in the neighbourhood of which town they had been informed some extraordinary boar shooting was to be met with.

Bearing in mind the recent calamities which had befallen the youth and the dogs at our noble friend's chateau near Guimgamp, Captain P—— and Mr. W—— intimated their intention of running over to this country for the purpose of purchasing some thorough-bred bull-dogs, as well as some rifles, as we had found that our guns, however well they carried ball, were not so effective as the grooved barrels.

Towards the latter end of September, on my return to town from Norfolk, where I had been enjoying some splendid shooting, I found a letter from Captain P——, announcing the joyful intelligence that Mr. W—— and himself would be in London by the end of that week, telling me I should find them at that *quietest* of all houses, Hatchett's Hotel in Piccadilly, by a certain day; a hope was also expressed that I should be enabled to accompany them on their return to Rennes, which would take place in a few days, as they had only undertaken the trip for the purpose of making some pecuniary arrangements, purchasing rifles, ammunition, and dogs.

My professional advisers raised no objection to this proposal; and, thanks to the liberality and good-feeling of one of the most accommodating and obliging of solicitors, I was in a position to undertake this second tour.

In the evening of the day named in their letter, I had the sincere pleasure of shaking Captain P—— and Mr. W—— by the hand ; and over a bottle of Mr. Hatchett's celebrated port, they recounted to me all the adventures they had met with since our separation.

It was late before we parted, but we heeded not encroaching upon the small hours, although the yawning and sleepy waiters wished us and our Brittany stories at the bottom of the Thames, I have no doubt.

On the following day we paid a visit to that renowned canine fancier, Mr. Benjamin White, of Bayswater, at whose establishment I had been informed we should find the sort of dog we were in quest of ; nor were we disappointed. I can take upon myself to say that no man in England has such splendid dogs—I mean bulldogs ; they are matchless, and for boar shooting invaluable.

From whence Mr. White procured the breed I am not prepared to say ; but they are the very largest bull-dogs I ever saw, and terrific to look upon. We purchased two couple of them ; and four finer or gamer animals could not be seen, and they were of no little service to us, as will be seen hereafter. We paid rather a large sum for them, but they were cheap at any price ; in proof of which we were offered more than double the money they cost us, by a French nobleman at Rennes.

Having been fortunate enough to secure these herculean quadrupeds, it behoved us to turn our attention to the rifles. We were recommended to Mr. William Moore, of the Edgware Road, and he is deservedly reputed to be the best maker we have. We each of us bought a two groove rifle of him ; and three more highly-finished or better guns it would be impossible to meet with ; the precision and strength

with which they carried were wonderful, and the boars had no chance with us, as I shall hereafter shew.

To these we added a goodly provision of bullets and copper caps, and, I might add, a little of Curtis and Harvey's best *straight-shooting* powder, which I succeeded in passing through the Custom House undetected.

Our shooting jackets being rather the worse for wear, I introduced Captain P—— and Mr. W—— to my friend Mr. Cook of Poland Street, as a matter of course ; for who in this habitable globe can make one like him? He has the gift, or, as the French say, the *chique*, of cutting a shooting jacket, which none of his competitors can aspire to ; and, in my humble opinion, he is equally eminent in every other branch of his profession—a better artist never wielded shears or took a measure.

Gentle reader, do you smoke? do you take snuff? for if you indulge in either or both of these luxuries, I can impart a *dodge* to you. Perhaps you are aware that not a cigar nor a pinch of takeable tobacco is to be had on the other side of the Channel. Before packing your trunks, send for an intelligent worker of tin; let him take measure of them—the sides, back, front, and bottom,—and tell him to make you an additional lining of metal, from half an inch to an inch in diameter will be sufficient; it must be well soldered. Send the bottom part to your purveyor of snuff, (Mr. Procter, of Fleet Street, is the man,) and have your mixture well crammed into it, then slip it into your trunk; fit the other parts,—the back, front, and sides,—in their places; fill two of them with your best Havannahs, and the other two with powder.

Paste the whole over with newspapers,

or common trunk lining, and pack away. This is the only way to *do* the douanniers on the other side of the water; and you will enjoy the additional gratification of having a good cigar and a pinch of fine snuff to resort to after a hard day's shooting. Two or three trunks cunningly lined in this way will afford a bountiful supply of tobacco for smoking and snuff-taking. I have succeeded for years in this way, and so, I hope, may you.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Leave London for Southampton—Passage to Jersey, and from thence to St. Malo—Journey to Rennes—Stop at Dol—The port irresistible—Arrival at Rennes—Preliminary *chasse*, and its consequences.

HAVING completed our arrangements and procured our passports, we started for Southampton about the middle of October, with our formidable dogs, which were under the superintendence of Mr. W——'s groom. Nine years ago the Southampton railroad was not in existence, if thought

of; and if it had been, I for one should have preferred the old system of posting or coaching; for, in spite of the mania for railways with which all our monopolizing capitalists are inoculated, give me a well-appointed coach and one of Mr. Chaplin's best teams in preference to smoke, cinders, steam, and stench,—to say nothing of a certain degree of apprehension which one and all must entertain in being at the mercy of an uncontrollable power, besides the *possibility* of being sent to the next world on the shortest possible notice, either piecemeal, comfortably parboiled, or jammed to a mummy.

These reflections will naturally arise in drawing a comparison between the stage-coach and the steam-carriage. In the former, the journey is performed noiselessly and comfortably; you can enter into conversation, have time to look about you and enjoy the scenery and the country

as you pass through it. In the latter, you are jolted and bumped, deafened by the stunning clatter of the machinery, and all communication with your neighbour utterly hopeless, besides your nose being offended by the poisonous smell from the coke ; and woe to your eyes if, like a greenhorn, you poke your head out of the carriage. Phaugh ! the very thought is sickening !

On arriving at Southampton, we repaired to the packet office on the quay, to make inquiries about a vessel for St. Malo. We found one little fishing smack bound direct for that port, but she was too small to suit my qualmish companions ; and I must admit, too, that her accommodations were not of the first order. We determined, therefore, upon waiting for the steamer, which would take us as far as Jersey, from which island I knew there was every facility for reaching the French

coast. My impatient friends were sorely disconcerted at the delay, but they little knew how pleasantly I should occupy them for the eight-and-forty hours they were doomed to spend in the good town of Southampton.

It so happened that a very old military acquaintance of mine had united himself in the silken bands of matrimony with an opulent and fascinating widow, and had pitched his tent without the walls of the town. I was persuaded that at "New Place" we should experience a hearty welcome, if not some very-tolerable shooting into the bargain.

My prediction was more than verified, for we were jointly and severally most cordially received at the hospitable mansion ; and through the kind exertions of our host, Captain G——, we had some excellent pheasant shooting, not far from the New Forest ; in short, the little delay

we had experienced, and which for a time had disturbed the equanimity of my brother boar-killers, was productive of infinite enjoyment to all ; and we had no little reason to rejoice instead of repining, as travellers are wont to do, at the unlooked-for detention.

On the afternoon of the third day we took leave of Southampton, and embarked on board the steamer for Jersey. We had abundance of daylight to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Southampton water, the Isle of Wight, the Needles, and the bold shores of Dorsetshire.

As we got into deep water, and encountered the short, bobbing sea, our party on deck diminished very rapidly, and the steward and stewardess had no easy time of it. A young gentleman from St. Mary-Axe told the former he wanted to be *very* unwell. This male provider of basins was, to all outward appearance, a hard-hearted

being ; he moved not a muscle, betrayed not the slightest sympathy for the surrounding sufferers—his coolness and self-possession were marvellous to behold ; indeed, I question to this hour if there were not some mischief lurking beneath this apparent apathy ; for, while I was indulging in a fragrant Havannah, and comforting my inward man with a glass of very tolerable brandy and water on the taffrail, I heard this cold-hearted steward ask a prostrate Cockney, who appeared to be in the last stage of qualmishness, whether he could *reach* him anything, and even carried his equivocal malice so far as to offer to *bring up* anything he wanted. The poor fellow looked broadswords at him, but not a word could he utter.

One provident old lady had armed herself with a nostrum, as a preventive to that most trying malady, sea-sickness, and while her little niece was in the act

of anointing a square piece of flannel, termed by the aunt a bosom comforter, to be applied to her chest, the worthy dame, to use her own comprehensive phrase, was turned *inside out*.

The longest night will have an end ; and so have, I trust, the miseries we are doomed to encounter, by sea and land. On the following morning we were off the hospitable Island of Guernsey, and I regretted exceedingly that I was prevented passing a week or two with some old friends who are natives of this terrestrial paradise.

The society in this isolated spot is of the very highest order ; some of the happiest days of my life were passed in Guernsey, for I had the good fortune to be quartered there about eighteen years ago. I could name some families who for kindness, hospitality, affability, and intellectual acquirements are not to be

equalled. With sorrow, therefore, did I watch the well-known spot as it receded from my view, and call to remembrance past and happier days.

My mournful reverie was disturbed by a summons, on the part of the nimble cabin-boy, to my pallid friends, Captain P—— and Mr. W——, whom I found in a pitiable state of exhaustion, and extended at full length in a receptacle called a *berth*, but which Mr. W——, in his agony, had said would prove his *death*.

My presence in the cabin, I found, was required to persuade the recumbents to go upon deck ; this, with some difficulty, I achieved ; and by the time we made the pier-head at Jersey, they were convalescent, although complaining bitterly of emptiness.

Sea-sickness is the most distressing of fugitive maladies ; but, strange to say, it meets with but little commiseration. I

speaking, I am happy to say, from observation only; for, praise be to Neptune, or whichever maritime deity has made me stomach-proof, I never experienced any sensation bordering even on nausea; but I have seen some victims suffer martyrdom, and more than once have been requested by some suffering friends to terminate their misery by pitching them overboard.

If any vessel be more conducive than another to *internal commotion*, I should say a steam-boat is that one. The tremulous motion caused by the vibration of the paddle-wheels must superinduce a sensation of qualmishness; in proof of which, a friend of mine, an old post-captain, who is at this moment in command of one of the finest frigates in our navy, is invariably ill—nay, most uncereemoniously sea-sick, on board a steamer. I have crossed frequently in company with

him from Calais to Dover, and he told me he was as troublesome a customer to the steward as the veriest cockney who had never smelt salt water.

Once more on *terra firma*, and my companions were themselves again. A tureen of good *consommé* and some hot brandy and water worked a miracle, and fortified them for a ramble about the town of St. Heliers. We walked down to the basin, and engaged a nice little craft, for a moderate sum, to convey us to St. Malo on the following day.

On returning from the port to our hotel, I met my old friend Major M——, of the Artillery, who exacted a promise from me to dine with him. My fellow-travellers were nothing loth to be permitted to go to roost betimes, and availed themselves of my absence to sleep off the effects of their exertions and fatigue on board the packet.

In the morning, we embarked on board *L'Estelle* for St. Malo, and a most delightful sail we had—Captain P—— and Mr. W—— subscribing their *quota* of nutriment to the fishes the whole of the way. In less than five hours we were comfortably housed in the Hotel de France at St. Malo.

The *douanniers*, *agents de place*, and *gens d'armes* here are the greatest adepts at imposition I ever had the misfortune to encounter. They soon discovered, however, that I was no novice, so they exercised their ingenuity and talents on the persons of less experienced travellers who followed us next day in the steam-boat.

My companions were too ill to look after these harpies, and had they made the trip by themselves, I know not two better pigeons for these extortionate functionaries to pluck. After much

squabbling and wrangling, not unaccompanied by threats on my part to seek the intervention of the mayor's or sous préfet's authority, we succeeded in passing our baggage through the custom-house and having it carried to the hotel.

We remained here for the night, and started in a hired *berline* the next morning for Rennes, a distance of nearly sixty miles. This, I beg to observe, is considered a journey of some magnitude in Brittany; not that I had any misgivings on the occasion I am recording, as it was to be performed *sur la grande route*; but I commend to all the saints in the calendar the luckless wight who may be doomed to traverse a cross-road in this unfrequented part of France; he should be *bump-proof*, or else woe to his bones!

We halted at Dol, strolled about the town, explored the environs, and finding a clean and comfortable looking

hotel—dined. Our hostess being well skilled in culinary lore, served us up a most tempting and appetizing repast, to which we did ample justice ; and, strange to say, we found some port wine of transcendant quality, and of surpassing richness and flavour.

The good lady prefaced the introduction of this choice stuff by a history appertaining to it, which I have neither space nor patience to transcribe. Her defunct husband became possessed of it by some miraculous circumstance connected with the stranding of a vessel on the coast, and which was consigned to the house of a celebrated *bon vivant* in Guernsey. Whoever ordered or whoever shipped it was no bad judge, for a purer or more genuine wine never gratified the palate of man ; it had been some twelve years in the cellar.

I blush to pen the truth—we stuck to

the port with such zealous devotion, that at the fourth bottle, we made up our minds to remain at Dol for the night. I never tell tales, so I shall forbear recording the number of corks which were drawn, or the consequences produced by the generous juice ; but in justice to the landlady's supernaculum I must state that no ill effects, not even a headache, resulted from this little excess ; indeed, I may say quite the reverse, for my fellow-travellers recovered their good looks, and confessed themselves indebted to this unexpected restorative for their buoyancy of spirits and reinstated health.

After breakfast—and, ye gods ! such a breakfast !—we posted on for Combourg and from thence to Hédé, where we resolved upon remaining for the night, to the manifest joy of our postilion, who undertook to answer for the superior accommodation of the *Hotel du Grand*

*Cerf*. As far as the accommodation went, we certainly had nothing to complain of, but the *cuisine* was immeasurably inferior, and the very indifferent claret but a miserable substitute for the shipwrecked port we had so recently enjoyed.

We found some very tolerable champagne, and one bottle of capital hermitage ; but alas ! only one ; so I betook myself to a jorum of hot-with—and punished the Cognac. We were off betimes in the morning, and got into Rennes by twelve o'clock.

This is a splendid town, and the *chef lieu* of the Departement of Ille et Vilaine. We were driven to the *Hotel du Commerce* ; but by the advice of Captain G—— of the navy, an old resident, we changed to the *Grande Maison*, a most comfortable hotel, where we took up our abode.

At the post-office I found my letters awaiting me from Paris, two of which

were by no means of an unpleasant description ; one containing a very satisfactory letter of credit from Rothschild's house, and the other (not the less acceptable) royal authority to shoot and hunt in the neighbouring forests. For this especial indulgence I was indebted to the kind exertions, interest, and influence of my friends in the French capital, Monsieur de R—— and the Comte de N——.

Here we were once more in the boar country, armed with permission to hunt and sport in the royal forests, and a similar indulgence was granted by all the landed proprietors in the vicinity of Rennes, who kindly waited upon us, and gave us the free shooting in their preserves.

Some two years prior to our arrival, Captain G——, of the navy, had endeavoured to set on foot an Anglo-Gallican hunt, and in his zeal had gathered to-

gether, by subscription, some hounds of all sorts, sizes and colours ; this pic-nic pack was composed of two couple and a half drafted from Hampshire, one couple from the Tourraine Hunt, and the rest purchased from the out-pourings of the royal kennel. The plan, however, failed. The French gentlemen in the neighbourhood lacked ardour ; the love of sport was not innate ; and when the novelty wore off, the *Société de Chasseurs* was broken up.

I am persuaded, nevertheless, that if the original projector of the scheme, Captain G——, had been endowed with the health, spirits, and indomitable sporting *cacoethes* of Mr. Martin Hawke, the plan would have succeeded ; but Captain G——'s delicate constitution was a bar to any extraordinary exertion, and thus his kind intentions were frustrated.

Within two days, however, of our

arrival, the tide seemed to turn in favour of *la chasse*, and we were waited upon by the quondam boar-killers, who vied with each other in their endeavours to carry into effect the object of our visit.

In order to ingratiate ourselves more sensibly with our new acquaintances, we invited them to dinner, and I know not a surer or more speedy method of establishing oneself in the good graces of acquaintances; the stomach is the road to the heart, depend upon it, and in this instance it was carefully and delicately administered to;—our plan succeeded, for we met with the most cordial co-operation.

I should have mentioned, that each of the subscribers to this motley pack had, on the dissolution of the canine partnership, taken a quadruped as an equivalent for the original subscription money; the dogs were consequently dispersed for miles around, and but for the prudent

exercise of our hospitality, would never have joined chorus again.

As it was, good fellowship, and good feeling, to which *perhaps* the good champagne contributed a little, did the business ; each owner proffered his dog, and by noon the following day, with one solitary exception, the original pack were mustered in the court-yard of *La Grande Maison*, and at our disposal.

By that day's post Captain P—— wrote to Tours for an English huntsman, if such a functionary could be found ; and it fortunately happened that a Sussex lad, one Jim Collins, a supernumerary in the hunting establishment of that town, could be spared. He was the bearer in person of the answer to our request, so promptly was it complied with.

He was promoted *instantanè* to the rank and office of master of the hounds. Our new English ally was well qualified for

the post: he was bred in a kennel, and understood the management of it thoroughly; in short, he was the very fellow we wanted. Our bull-dogs, which we had left behind us at St. Malo, in charge of the groom, did not arrive so soon as we had a right to expect; the delay was accounted for, and was occasioned by one of the animals, Belcher by name, (and a most pugnacious quadruped he was,) who, to demonstrate the purity of his breed, had incontinently tackled an unoffending cow while crossing the market-place of St. Malo, on his way to the vehicle which was to convey the bull family and their keeper to their destination.

A second cause of delay occurred at the Bureau de Roulage, for Mr. Belcher took exception to the driver of the vehicle, and nothing would pacify him. In fact, he sadly misbehaved himself, and caused us a great deal of trouble as well

as expense. The three others, who had been christened by Mr. White by the high-sounding names of "Blucher," "Boxer," and "Boatswain," were tolerably tractable and peaceable; but Belcher was a sad quarrelsome dog, although the most courageous and gallant fellow when occasion required: his adventure with the cow cost us nearly fifty francs, but his superior powers made us lose sight of his expensive habits.

We were not sorry when the groom presented himself with his four charges, for we began to be apprehensive that some more serious evil had befallen them. The dogs were greatly admired by the gentlemen at Rennes, for their size, strength, and formidable appearance, and justly considered as curiosities.

No time was now lost in exercising the newly-organized pack of hounds, in order

that they might become familiarized to their new master and huntsman.

A day was soon fixed upon to give them a run, as an earnest of our future intentions, and the meet was to take place in the neighbourhood of a French gentleman's chateau, at Le Bout de Lande, some eleven miles from Rennes, the hospitable proprietor having invited us and several of his brother sportsmen to a *dejeuner à la fourchette*.

I can, as a faithful chronicler, declare that a more merry knot of fellows never were congregated together; and had it not been for the attraction of trying the dogs, Bacchus only knows how long we might have sipped the champagne, which was supplied to us with an unsparing hand.

As this little excursion was only by way of prelude to our future sport, and for the avowed purpose of bringing the

dogs together again, and to give them a taste of their vocation, we had interdicted the use of rifle or gun — for we only intended to give the dogs a run — nothing more ; so that an hour more or less was not of much consequence.

About two o'clock we were in the saddle, and bending our way to the woods ; the little pack under the command of Collins, the huntsman, with Blucher, Boatswain, Boxer, and Belcher, bringing up the rear. Arrived by the wood's side, we were instructed each to take a bridle path, pointed out by the attendant guide, which we were informed would lead to the *grande allée*, and down which it would be his aim to drive the boars.

Before we separated, Collins and the guide departed westward, taking the hounds with them, and one of the bulldogs, (Boxer,) which at our huntsman's request was allowed to accompany him.

I deemed it prudent, under existing circumstances to keep the other three with us. Blucher attached himself to Captain P——; Boatswain, to Mr. W——; and the ferocious Belcher was consigned to me, the surly gentleman having evinced a decided partiality for my unworthy self, in consequence of my having, on more than one occasion, administered personally to his gastronomic propensities. An extra paunch or so did the business. He entertained a grateful reminiscence of the abdominal delicacy, and stuck to me like a trump ever after. With such a companion I felt perfectly safe, and he followed the heels of my horse as if we had been acquaintances of long standing. Groping one's way through a blind entangled path in an unknown forest, for the first time, and unarmed to boot, is by no means a pleasant operation, and I began to think there was no end to the one I had

selected. It is true I had a little *gamin* with me, but he knew as little of the wood as myself, and the only use he could be of was to hold my horse in case of need. After some misgivings, and a slight exhibition of impatience, I came to the *allée* in question.

Here I was to wait until the guide and Collins set to work ; but I was not kept long in suspense, for some cheering sounds reached me in a few minutes.

I could distinguish the *ho, ho, ho's*, and the *ti, ti, ti's* of the guide and a French amateur in the shape of a farmer, who with a pole and a spear at the end of it was following on foot and encouraging the hounds ; nor was Collins behind hand with his companions, and his national "hark forward" and other English notes of encouragement were more intelligent and musical to my ear than the continental jargon.

The dogs, however, not being all of a sort, some French and some English, the admixture of languages was admissible ; at all events they seemed to understand it, for Collins told me in the evening they worked admirably well together.

They were now in full cry, and giving tongue beautifully, so that I was on the look out for a boar or two, for I was certain our pack had started the game.

I now bitterly repented not having brought our guns or rifles with us, for independently of my anxiety to get a shot at the boar, the idea struck me of the impolicy of paying the woods a visit without weapons of defence.

I contemplated the possibility, in fact, the probability of the dogs leaving us in quiet possession of the forest, while they followed their boar. Killing one I considered quite out of the question, and how the dogs were to be called off I knew not ;

all hope I conceived would be at an end unless the swine would take to the plain, but where that plain was *I* could not tell; these unpleasant reflections were interrupted by a very perceptible undulatory motion within a few yards of my resting-place.

I was gazing in breathless anxiety at this point, when a splendid *chevreuil* bounded into the riding and passed me at a railroad pace. By this time the 'dogs were nearing my post very rapidly, and my pugnacious comrade Belcher was manifestly becoming impatient for a fray of some kind or other, an impulse by no means diminished by the sudden and startling appearance of the *chevreuil*.

I know not which, the master or the dog, was the more anxious of the two; I felt myself approaching to fever heat, and dismounting, gave my horse to the boy at my side to hold.

I had scarcely done so, when an indescribable sound, accompanied by an awful rustling noise, portended some adventure : the dogs were close upon us, in an instant a fine boar rushed from the thicket, and passed close before me. I had scarcely recovered from my surprise ere Belcher had tackled him, and was hanging at his haunches : calling him off was out of the question, and the peculiar method resorted to by dog-fanciers in the Westminster Pit, of insinuating the varmint's tail between the *dentes molari*, was rather too dangerous an experiment to resort to on the present occasion.

It is to be presumed the boar liked not so pertinacious an assailant as my friend Belcher, who clung to his hind quarters with a praiseworthy ardour ; the swine waxed wrath, to which I should imagine the gentle pinches of the canine jaws contributed in no slight degree ; the assailant

was not to be shaken off, and as the boar's power of progression was thereby impeded, he drew himself up and prepared for mischief. It was an anxious moment, and I would have sacrificed half my worldly goods to have been armed with my trusty rifle.

At this critical juncture the pack appeared in sight, and, to my indescribable joy, Collins, Boxer, the guide, and the amateur with his spear; but during the short moment that I had turned from the contending quadrupeds to the approaching succour, a change, and a fearful one too, had taken place between the belligerents; the assailed had become in his turn the assailer; the boar was giving poor Belcher a taste of his tusks, and I was apprehensive of mischief; for however great the courage and strength of the dog, I was fearful that his temerity might prove fatal against so formidable, and at the same time so novel, a foe.

I called to the guide, and implored of him to make use of the amateur's weapon, in order that the boar's attention might be diverted from the dog; at the same time, I must confess, I hardly anticipated a very ready compliance with the request; but, to my surprise as well as pleasure, he manfully walked up to the bristly monster, and buried the spear in his chest.

Boxer also ran to the rescue, and pinned the brute most gallantly; and Belcher gathered fresh courage at this timely assistance, and, although severely lacerated in his hind quarters, took the opportunity of releasing his hold for the purpose of securing another in some more vulnerable part: he had already felt the boar's tusk, which made him rather wary.

As soon as the *sanglier* got a touch of the spear, his attention, as I suspected, was directed to our guide, and Belcher, with an instinctive cunning, embraced the

opportunity afforded him, and seized his antagonist by the wind-pipe, keeping his fore-legs under him in such a manner, and so closely to his own body, as to preclude the possibility of the boar taking undue liberties with them. The scene altogether was highly exciting, and I regretted not a little that Captain P—— and Mr. W—— were not within call, as I could have wished them to witness the *skrimmage*.

A fearful struggle now ensued between the guide and the boar, and had it not been for the aid afforded by Collins, in enabling his companion to keep fast hold of the spear, the issue of the contest might have been doubtful ; but two pair of arms keeping the steel buried in the chest of the animal, to say nothing of the powerful grip of the wind-pipe so zealously maintained by Belcher, were too much for the now prostrate hog. His strength was

failing him fast, and it was evident he would soon bite the dust.

Although not in immediate contact with the enemy, my share in the proceeding was by no means an inactive one, for I was engaged in flogging off the hounds, and no easy task either, they being one and all eager to share the danger and afford their assistance; and had it not been for Collins's massive hunting-whip, their interference might have done mischief. It was desirable to check their ardour in this particular; for, in the event of their running into another boar without a bulldog or two to back them, the chances were the pack would have been reduced considerably in number, inasmuch as a hound has not the slightest chance against the formidable tusks, which, according to Mr. Collins's recorded opinion, are the *penetratingest things as is*.

As the boar lay at his last gasp, though

still defending himself nobly against his aggressors, we were joined by Captain P—— and Mr. W——, who, surprised at the delay, and the unusual baying of the hounds, which continued fixed in one spot, determined upon leaving their posts to ascertain the cause. I was pleased to see them come cantering up the *grande allée*, with Boatswain and Blucher at their heels. These latter allies did not require much persuasion to join in the fray, for they no sooner saw their canine companions at close quarters with the unclean monster, than they lent their powerful aid, although late in the field, to finish the work so courageously begun. With such a reinforcement, the boar's fate was soon decided, and, by way of a *coup de grace*, Collins dexterously drew his clasp-knife across the jugular, from whence the stream of life ebbed in gushing torrents.

The next duty to be performed was the

examination of our faithful dog. Poor Belcher had suffered severely in the struggle: his hind leg had been dreadfully lacerated, I should say by a bite; but the worst wound was on the shoulder; he had been awfully ripped, and the gash was frightful to look at. Even in this crippled state we had the utmost difficulty in disengaging him from the object of his fury; in fact, it was only accomplished by biting his tail with such force as nearly to sever a joint—a masticating process, performed with infinite skill and *gusto* by our master of the hounds in person.

This operation finished, he propounded the following question:

“Please, sir, may I empty that ’ere beast?”

A willing affirmative being given, in a trice the boar’s entrails were reeking on the green sward, and served out in just proportions to the eager lookers-on,—our

little pack; and, to judge by the convulsive smacks which followed each oleaginous mouthful, I should say the repast was to them a most savoury one.

Thus terminated this day's adventure, and I had no little cause for rejoicing. It was next to madness to enter the wood without fire-arms, and had it not been for the indomitable courage of the noble animal by my side, there is no saying what the result would have been.

There are plenty of dogs to be found in France that will *hunt* the boar, but few will *tackle* him. The English thoroughbred bull-dog is an invaluable, and I might add, an indispensable, companion to the boar-shooter; and should any of my countrymen be induced to run over to Brittany, I strongly urge them to take one, if not two, of these faithful animals with them.

In compassion to the champion Belcher, we determined upon returning to Rennes

immediately, and right about face was the word ; but we were sadly puzzled as to the manner of carrying home our wounded ally. Walk he could not ; at least we would not allow him, although he would have followed me till he dropped, for his courage was invincible. Unfortunately, we had not a carriage with us, nor even a basket in which to sling him.

I determined, therefore, upon taking him up before me on the horse, as far as our hospitable friend's chateau, from whence I knew he could be conveyed in a cabriolet to Rennes.

This animal, although without exception the most savage, untameable brute of his breed, allowed Collins and myself to handle him like a child. I placed him on the horse's withers, and supported him until we reached the chateau. He was as gentle as a lamb, and evidently sensible of the care bestowed upon him, and the pains

taken to alleviate his suffering. The French gentlemen who had accompanied us were lavish in their encomiums on our *dogue*, as they called poor Belcher, and did all in their power, as well as our host, to administer to his wants.

As soon as we reached the house, a cabriolet was provided, in which I forwarded the wounded hero to Rennes under the fostering care of Collins, our huntsman.

The French farmer, who had volunteered his services *en amateur*, had prevailed upon one of the followers to remain behind and assist him in bringing the *sanglier* to the chateau. But I was too much occupied in attending to the safety of my faithful animal to heed the conveyance of the dead boar. I was informed, however, that they had cut a pole, on which they slung their load, resting one end on the saddle of an ambling pony, and the other on

their shoulders. They were thus employed when met by some straggling villagers who had been sent to their assistance by some of our party, on their way to the chateau.

We lost no time in proceeding to Rennes, where a sumptuous banquet had been prepared, and to which we had been invited; it was, in fact, a supper—and a right good one, too. I did not join the jolly fellows until nearly a whole course had been demolished, as I had been employed, with a clever, good-natured surgeon, in dressing poor Belcher's wounds. After thoroughly cleansing and washing them, styptics were applied, and, under surgical guidance, I sewed up the deep incision made by the boar's tusk in the shoulder. It was, in truth, a frightful gash; but the dog never winced, and licked my hand at almost every puncture I made with the needle. I gave him a plentiful dose of castor oil,

which he washed down with a liberal allowance of soup, and I left him for the night on a bed of straw, that many a time I would have given half my worldly goods for.

Having joined my fellow *chasseurs*, I made up for lost time by attacking forthwith the good things provided for the occasion, a list of which would fill half a dozen chapters. The party was a very large one, for several of the residents in the town had been invited to meet us.

I was seated next to a portly person, who was kind enough to confess that he was proud of becoming acquainted with three Englishmen. His attachment to our nation (so the gentleman said) was unbounded: his wife and daughters, he informed me, were perfectly enchanted with our countrymen. Indeed, I was somewhat puzzled to ascertain how far his exuberant admiration would carry

him, when he asked me, in most unintelligible English, if I would like a *littel deer*; meaning, I afterwards discovered, some roasted *chevreuil*, but which I, at the time, and in the innocence of my heart, construed into an offer of one of his marriageable female children.

The worthy man had been studying English for some few months, and seized every opportunity of proclaiming the proficiency he had attained. He gave me to understand that a *professeur Anglais* was domiciled within the walls of the city, who gave lessons to the polite portion of its inhabitants. I had the honour of being presented to this *professeur Anglais* on the following evening, as will be seen presently.

This offer of a *littel deer* is almost on a par with an erudite note of invitation to dinner, which I once received from a general officer, while I was quartered in

Canada. The worthy general had the good or ill fortune to be united to one of the plainest women that ever encountered the gaze of man, and in the plenitude of his hospitality invited me to partake of his family *fair*, on a certain day at six. This to a youngster, as I then was, will be admitted was somewhat embarrassing. I went, however; was proof against the smiles of his better-half, and punished the claret. Cacology was venial in those days, but I keep the note as a curiosity; but *revenons à nos moutons*.

The evening passed off most joyously; every one was pleased with the transient success of the day, and anticipating wonders to come. On the following morning we received, from the Mayor of Rennes, a polite invitation to a ball, which was to be given on that evening by the principal merchants and bankers of the place! It

was accepted, of course, and we were really much gratified. We accompanied Captain and Mrs. G——, with whom we had partaken of a family dinner.

The good citizens of Rennes wisely keep early hours ; hence the good looks of their lovely daughters. By eight o'clock the *salle du spectacle* was filled with youth and beauty, and numberless were the quadrilles and valtzes we perpetrated.

At the earnest request of the before-mentioned *professeur Anglais*, this redoubtable gentleman was introduced to me by his portly pupil, who had so unintentionally alarmed me on the preceding night by his equivocal offer.

This imparter of knowledge was a certain Mr. Samuel Boulter, who communicated to me the important fact of his having once kept a seminary in the classic

regions of Hackney; how or why he established himself at Rennes, my innate discretion forbade me to inquire.

Mr. Samuel Boulter's French equalled in purity and correctness his pupil's English; the following is a sample, and literally true. By way, I presume, of impressing me with the idea of the profundity of his knowledge in the Gallic idiom, he turned to his introducer, and thus addressed him in French:—" *Nong pas, Moosheer, vous trouvez les Français dams bieng bookoo ploo moing bell que les Anglais dams?*" by which learned interrogatory, I inferred that he was desirous of ascertaining whether his French friend was not of opinion that the English women were handsomer than the French.

The pedagogue was evidently desirous to *do the civil* to us all the evening, and was particularly anxious for my opinion as to the beauties of the scenery around

Rennes, which he graphically described as very *picturestic*. But the schoolmaster was *abroad*, so I smiled at his vulgarity.

It will be seen that we had ample store of amusement. We were received cordially and kindly by every one, and *fête'd* wherever we went.

END OF VOL. <sup>I.</sup> II.

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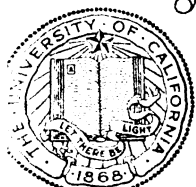
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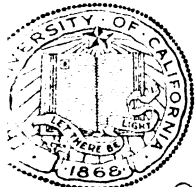
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